Abstract

Finding *More*: Feeling, Dancing, and Being Through Intuitively Queer Knowledges

Intuitively queer knowing can be understood as sensing or feeling that there is something *more* out there to know, see, and feel than may be initially apparent. Here, queer is an indicator of unstable identification, one that calls to queer subjects and supports their engagement in queer self-formations that challenge the assumed linearity of time and space. I find José Esteban Muñoz's (1999) theory of disidentifications to be especially useful in debunking the mainstream view that identification is stable and, instead, understanding identification as always unstable and oftentimes contradictory. The first chapter of this thesis is concerned with situating my exploration of intuition as a form of knowledge in relation to Western academic norms that privilege detached, objective knowledges. In the second chapter, I articulate examples of unstable identifications—and the intuitively queer knowing that facilitates them—that is dramatized in performance work, especially in comedian Marga Gomez's (1996) sketch, *Marga Gomez is Pretty, Witty & Gay*. Memory, as explored by Muñoz and Gomez, is another site of crossing, and I theorize the importance of queer memories using Jessica Benjamin's (1990) notions of the intersubjective and intrapsychic and Andrew Barnaby's (2013) interpretation of the Freudian concept, belatedness. Performance work is integral to this project given that it was created in conversation with a capstone piece in dance titled, "returning, again." The rehearsal process for "returning, again" functioned as a space of exploration and reflection for me and my cast of four dancers, allowing us to investigate our personal experiences of queer identity, glamor, and intuitively queer knowing through movement. I explore this site of knowing and making in the third chapter, but my experiences as a dancer leave traces throughout all of my writing, emphasizing dance as a vital piece of my own ongoing queer self-formation.

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May 2025

Acknowledgments

To Professor Gunderman, thank you for all of your support, patience, and wisdom throughout this process. Reading the introduction to Muñoz's *Disidentifications* in your Feminist & Queer Theory course was a pivotal moment in my academic trajectory. I have learned so much from our conversations and I especially enjoyed our discussion about wigs.

To Professor Diewald, thank you for always telling me to write more about dance and encouraging me to push further into my intuitions. Thank you for visiting rehearsals and "getting" the queer world that my dancers and I had made. Your approach to dancing and communicating about dance has been deeply eye-opening for me, and I have been so lucky to learn from you.

To Professor Smith, thank you for making your Senior Seminar in Gender Studies such a kind, welcoming space. It was so wonderful to be in community and in dialogue with you, my peers, and the other faculty members who visited our class meetings. You helped me to chart a path through the processes of writing and researching that truly worked for me.

To Professor Barron, thank you for challenging me in technique classes since my sophomore year; you always made learning and exploring feel fulfilling and safe, even when it was pushing me out of my comfort zone.

To Ava, Cherace, Emma, Hannah, thank you for dancing and making with me for the last two semesters. Thank you for listening to me even when I did not make much sense and for being so invested in this process. Thank you for pushing through moments of uncertainty and bringing your full, complex selves into rehearsals. I am so proud of the queer world that we made together.

To Mum and Dad, thank you for always being happy to proofread my work. Thank you for loving me through moments of uncertainty and frustration, and always being there to talk. I have been so lucky to grow up around so much love and acceptance.

To Kate, thank you for caring about me so deeply and for never letting me forget it. Thank you for helping me to keep things in perspective and to remember why this work is so important to me in the first place.

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TO INTRODUCE

Marga Gomez (1996) ruminates on a smoky, queer life-world in her performance work, *Marga Gomez Is Pretty Witty & Gay* (*MGisPW&G*), which premiered in 1991. Gomez is a San Francisco-raised Cuban and Puerto Rican lesbian comedian, the only child of her comedian father and dancer mother, and a self-appointed "nostalgia queen" according to her artistic statement in "Excerpts from *Memory Tricks, Marga Gomez Is Pretty Witty & Gay* and *A Line Around the Block*," in *Contemporary Plays by Women of Color* edited by Kathy A. Perkins and Roberta Uno (p. 191). *MGisPW&G* figures prominently in the introduction to José Esteban Muñoz's (1999) *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. For Muñoz, this sketch was the impetus for a remembering that influenced his theory of identity that privileges fragmentation, contradiction, and instability. Throughout this thesis, Muñoz's work within *Disidentifications* provides an invaluable theoretical framework and contextual background for my own thinking. I will further describe my approach to and engagements with queer theory, especially in the contexts of identity construction and futurity later on, but this introduction must start with Gomez because she was the beginning of this project.

MGisPW&G takes place on a set intended to resemble Gomez's (1996) bedroom, on her bed. Muñoz (1999) opens his discussion of Gomez's work by stating "There is a certain lure to the spectacle of one queer standing onstage alone," and there is a particular intimacy created here, in a queer bedroom in the company of a queer talking about her own queerness (p. 1). When the excerpt begins, Gomez is debating her decision to appear on a television talk show and bemoaning the move of queers into the mainstream, into the world of visibility offered by the American talk show. Between "LESBIANS WITH LONG HAIR TOMORROW" and "GAY MEN WITH ORDINARY APARTMENTS," Gomez fears that the demand being placed upon

queer individuals to appear on talk shows is becoming too much; in her words, "the demand for homosexual talk show guests is exceeding our supply. Let's face it. We breed minimally, carefully, only after much thought and couples counseling. Contrary to popular belief we do not recruit. We can only impress" (p. 195). Unfortunately, impressing can only do so much; the call of the mainstream for queers to be televised is unceasing, and Gomez is unsure if she is willing to be the mainstream's next victim.

Gomez (1996) reflects on her own experience of being deeply impressed by queers who appeared, of course, on a talk show—on David Susskind's "Open End." She recalls, at age ten, being lured from her bedroom when her mother turned on the program; by that age, Gomez had "already developed HOMOSEXUAL HEARING" (p. 196). Child Gomez feigned homophobia by deploying a "homophobic expression," one that would ensure that her mother would have no clue that she was "mesmerized by the lady homosexuals and riveted to every word that came from their lesbian lips" (p. 196). Although these lesbians were "very depressed, very gloomy," Gomez could not help but be intrigued, intrigued by their disguises (raincoats, sunglasses, and wigs) and their constant smoking that turned the scene into more of a "smokey bar" than a talk show set (p. 196). According to the lesbian who identified herself with the "synonym," Cherene, the lesbians must "cloak ourselves in a veil of secrecy or risk losing our employment as truck drivers" (p. 196). Despite their furtiveness, the lesbians knew that Gomez was watching them and Cherene called to young Gomez, saying, "At this time we want to say 'hello' to a new friend who is watching this at home with her mom on WNEW-TV in Massapequa, Long Island. Marga Gomez, Marga Gomez, welcome to the club Cara Mia" (p. 196). Although the lesbians could not risk naming themselves, revealing their identities, Gomez was identified explicitly, but only to

Gomez herself; her mother "was in such deep denial she didn't pick up on Cherene's clue" (p. 196).

After recounting this formative memory, Gomez (1996) bemoans the loss of "*THE LIFE*," in all its mysteriousness, queerness, and smokiness, of which the lesbians on television provided her a glance (p. 196). After all, as Gomez states adamantly, "It was the wigs that made me want to be one" (p. 196). "*THE LIFE*" that young Gomez so admired has, as adult Gomez explains, become "*THE COMMUNITY*," which is "made up of all of us who twenty years ago would have been in *THE LIFE*. And in *THE COMMUNITY* there is no smoking" (p. 197). The mysterious, alluring, stigmatized world that Gomez so admired and longed for in her youth has been sanitized, filtered through the mainstream and the governing power of heteronormativity. Although the queer community ("*THE COMMUNITY*") has gained visibility in the mainstream political arena, it has lost its "veil of secrecy" and, in the same way, queers have lost the privilege of negativity, of doom and gloom, demonstrated by the lesbians on "Open End" (p. 196-7). Those in "*THE LIFE*" were allowed to use "synonyms" and wear disguises and they were certainly allowed to smoke.

Muñoz's (1999) thinking in *Disidentifications* frames this loss as an example of Gomez's (1996) disidentification with stereotypes surrounding queer and lesbian identities; Gomez does not throw out the abjection and negativity associated with the representation of the lesbians on television, instead refashioning this abjection and negativity into intriguing possibilities for queer glamor. Occupying negativity and homophobic stereotypes—and reworking them—is a central theoretical concept in queer studies, especially in work that centers identity construction and futurity. The debate in queer theory between an antirelational pessimism and a perspective that emphasizes relationality and even utopianism provides an added potential of representational

meaning to *MGisPW&G*. The lesbians on "Open End" represent an antisocial negativity, a holding on to—and even playing in to—the stigmatization that attaches itself to them; the lesbians are unabashedly dyke-y, smoking truck drivers and they know that it is dangerous for them to reveal their true identities. These lesbians do not call for a move towards "*THE COMMUNITY*" but instead situate themselves clearly within the stigmatization and smokiness of "*THE LIFE*." Gomez, on the other hand, romanticizes this negativity to the extent that it supports her own process of self-formation as a young lesbian, but adult Gomez simultaneously bemoans the discriminatory policies regarding queer individuals in the military and gay marriage that were in place in the 1990s. Within *MGisPW&G*, Gomez does not throw out the past in favor of a queer-inclusive future, but also does not dispose of dreams for the future in favor of a return to the past.

The rest of this introduction functions as a framing of my theorizing in relation to past and ongoing debates in queer studies, namely that regarding futurity; I also briefly allude to the frameworks that I employ and prioritize throughout this thesis, and how they intersect with my own lived experiences and identities. In queer theory, a queer comprehension of futurity as antirelational and always negative has been generated by Lee Edelman (2004) in *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. The view that queerness is a future-oriented project that inherently challenges linear notions of temporality has been developed more broadly as a facet of queer of color critique; Muñoz's (1999, 2009) *Disidentifications* and *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* are two of the formative texts in the queer of color tradition and pose queerness as always projecting into the future through calls to utopianism. This debate is not best understood as a binary that separates perspectives—critiquing it as a binary, and nothing more, is antithetical to queer theory as a practice of problematizing and reading beyond

binaries—but as a productive, active site of meaning-making that, I go on to argue, is always relational. My following descriptions of the divergences between these perspectives is necessary in order to situate my thesis, and the theoretical traditions from which it emerges, in a broader context within queer theory, but also does not intend to reify binary thinking.

In *No Future*, Edelman (2004) develops an intrinsic connection between queerness and the death drive, arguing in favor of embracing everything that is stigmatized and vilified about queerness (and queers) in the mainstream. In this framework, there emerges a distinction between the "Child" (as a symbol of the drive of the heteronormative order to (re)produce and therefore engage in a symbolic practice of immortality) and the queer subject.[1] On this distinction, Edelman writes:

> Indeed, at the heart of my polemical engagement with the cultural text of politics and the politics of cultural texts lies a simple provocation: that queerness names the side of those not ''fighting for the children,'' the side outside the consensus by which all politics confirms the absolute value of reproductive futurism (p. 3).

In Edelman's understanding of reproductive futurism, the Child symbolizes the governing power of heteronormativity, that which provides an illusion of stable futurity for those who do (can) reproduce. Thus, heteronormativity affirms itself—its own position of governance over sexuality and the social order—through its discourse on futurity as only accessible via the constant (symbolic and literal) production of the Child. Queerness becomes an oppositional force to heteronormativity in that it disavows the Child and its ensurance of a future; here, queerness also

[1] Debates in feminist studies regarding the "Child" and children preceded those in queer studies regarding futurity. Whereas 20th century white feminisms conceptualized children as forms of oppression that are forced upon women, from which they must be liberated, Black feminisms argued for motherhood as a form of liberation itself. Hortense J. Spillers' (1987) "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book" discusses the ways in which Black mothers were (and are) denied motherhood and denied the privilege to mother their children. She writes that, "In effect, under conditions of captivity, the offspring of the female does not 'belong' to the Mother" (p. 74). She writes further on the white supremacist, eugenics practices that generated the discursive image of the Black, enslaved, child-bearing woman. This woman is not allowed to "mother" her children in the way that white women are allowed, as she is simultaneously disallowed to be / be seen as a woman—she is "ungendered" by the discursive and literal practices of white supremacy that turn flesh into a "commodity of exchange" (p. 68, 75).

resists occupying an oppositional position to heteronormativity (or any other discourse of power) given that queerness "oppose[s] itself to the logic of opposition" (p. 4). In this way, as Edelman explains, queerness is always a disturbance to stable identification in that it utterly repudiates the symbolic order and its practice of naming and defining. For queers, this implies a complete evacuation from positions of optimism for a more queer inclusive future, for these positions still enable (heteronormative) futurism to seep in and undermine queerness. Thus, in Edelman's argument for a queer antisocial and antirelational politics, a turn to an unstable negativity is the only viable resistance to heteronormativity as a discourse of power that works through the future and its assumed stability.

For Muñoz, the future is not a space to be avoided or disavowed, but the only potential for the realization of queerness. In *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz (2009) invokes traces of queer negativity in order to engage with queer futurity through disidentification; disidentification, as the central theoretical production in Muñoz's (1999) *Disidentifications*, refers to the process of recycling stereotypes and negative connotations that are linked to personal identifications (whether racial, sexual, or gendered) in order to create novel, more affirming possibilities of understanding the self. Like Edelman (2004), Muñoz theorizes identity and future to be always unstable, but this instability is established through a refashioning of positivity *and* negativity in a way that affirms queerness as an unstable ontology, one that holds a great depth of affective, social, and political possibilities for being and becoming; Muñoz explicitly imagines "queerness as collectivity" and "always in the horizon" (2009, p. 11). This perspective involves prioritizing queerness as an also always intersectional project, one that never occludes other identity categories in favor of conceptualizing "the purity of sexuality as a singular trope of difference" (2009, p. 11). Muñoz's (1999) work in *Disidentifications* is an early example of queer of color

critique in that the intersections of identities and their co-constitutive properties construct the potential for theorizing disidentification, or "*identities-in-difference*" (p. 6). Drawing heavily from the work of Black feminist thinkers, Muñoz works from and with the perspectives of queer of color thinkers and makers, calling to performance and artistic work as especially rich sites of reading the instability and performativity of identity. As Muñoz (2009) further elaborates, utopianism is also key to queer, intersectional work in that it ties queerness to a futurity, to a sense that queerness can never be here, but can be gleaned from the past and the future (the "*then and there*") in order to critique the present (p. 1).

One of the most salient distinctions between Edelman's (2004) and Muñoz's (1999, 2009) theoretical perspectives on futurity arises from their treatments of sexuality as a marker of identity that meaningfully intersects with race. The 2005 MLA Convention in Washington, D.C. brought together Edelman, Muñoz, Jack Halberstam, and Tim Dean to debate varying conceptualizations of queer futurity within queer studies as a field; this debate is summarized in "The Antisocial Thesis in Queer Theory," which is introduced by Robert L. Caserio (2006) and includes short arguments from each of the four aforementioned theorists. Although Edelman establishes a stark contrast in his piece between his and Halberstam's allegiance to "political negativity" and the "queer utopianism" of Muñoz and Dean, this contrast is more translucent than it appears (p. 821). Muñoz refers to Edelman's antirelationality as a framework for futurity as "a white man's last stand," or a desperate approach to keep sexuality isolated from other identity categories within academic discourse (p. 825). The debate that persists between these thinkers does not imply that they are not influenced by one another, that their perspectives are not enmeshed and built upon and through each other. Muñoz (2009) explicitly states that his work in *Cruising Utopia* is deeply influenced by Edelman's (2004) *No Future*, describing his

approach to futurity as "an idiosyncratic allegiance to the polemical force of [Edelman's] argument and nothing like an easy dismissal" (p. 11). Essentially, Muñoz's working on and with Edelman's theory is a critical disidentification, one that involves queer critique as an opposition to the binary logics of opposition. Nonetheless, Muñoz considers the intersections of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, and class in ways that are certainly divergent from Edelman's approach, as I will further describe in the second chapter.

This debate and its potentials for being read as more than a binary between perspectives is central to my own textual and embodied exploration of intuition as a queer form of knowing; intuition is queer in the sense that it resists traditional, academic modes of producing knowledge and in that it is especially valuable for queer subjects in processes of queer knowing and becoming. Throughout this thesis, I explore the systemic devaluing of intuition through Western academic discourses which I understand as Cartesian in their insistence on a division between mind and body—their insistence that binaries appropriately define our world. Psychology, as a field, has attempted to codify and define intuition as a static concept while simultaneously deeming it to be a non-rigorous and illegitimate mode of knowing. Embracing the ambiguity offered by intuition, I believe, offers more complex, richer explorations of knowledge productions, especially those which evade articulation and lack "evidence;" I draw from theorists in queer studies—many of whom engage with psychoanalytic and object relations theories—in order to explore, but not define, intuition as a potential for knowing, seeing, and being *more*. I also invoke the theoretical and performance productions of queer individuals to elaborate on intuition as a blurring of temporal linearity, one that demonstrates how subjects become (and are always becoming) across time and space, in relation to each other and in relation to versions of themselves. My thinking is aligned with that of Muñoz (2009) in that traces of utopianism are

present in my theorizing; trusting our intuitions is a radical act that holds the unstable, shifting knowledge of our bodies and embodied histories as a powerful practice of meaning-making and of being in community. I argue in favor of proliferating, contradictory truths and identities that are forever in flux, resisting the lure of static, predictable notions of truth as put forward by Cartesian philosophy.

Utilizing intuition as a research method—in short, as a practice of attuning to preferences and moments of intrigue—is one that implies an inherent stability, an ever present queerness, of all knowledge productions. This is not a strategy for neutralizing the power imbalances that categorize forms of knowledge and their methods and locations of production, but as a way of understanding all knowledge as always produced from a location. In this way, my argument leans heavily on Donna Haraway's (1988) "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," especially insofar as I believe that knowledge production should be understood as always subjective and always embodied. For Haraway, this does not necessitate a disavowal of possibilities for objectivity in research, but a reframing of how objectivity can be practiced in conversation with a feminist ethics of location—an ethics that engages critically with one's own identity, experiences, and positionality as a key part of knowledge production. Regarding the situatedness of my perspective, my whiteness is an ever-present aspect of my subjecthood that—although I do not understand racial categorizations as stable—rubs up against my engagements with queer of color critique. Racial privilege emerges in many cases as blindspots or shallow analyses of race in conjunction with other identity categories, like sexuality. Throughout this thesis, I aim not to center my whiteness as an essential part of my perspective, but as an identification that marks the limits of my perspective as a human and theorist. Although this practice is still—and will remain—in-progress in my

writing, it reflects my belief in the necessity that theorists' partial perspectives must be recognized in order to deepen engagements with feminist objectivities, as Haraway argues.

Resistance to binaries enlivens my organization of this thesis as an interdisciplinary endeavour, one that engages many of the multiplicities of identity and experience that I hold within my own body. Just as much as it reflects an engagement with queer theory and especially queer of color critique, this work involves continuous calls to performance and dance studies. I wrote this thesis alongside making and a rehearsing a dance capstone project titled "returning, again"; my written work is just as much about my textual research as it is about my research in rehearsals alongside my cast of dancers (Ava, Cherace, Hannah, and Emma), in late-night improvisational sessions, and in the documentaries on 1980s Ballroom culture that I watched again and again. Clare Croft's (2017) *Queer Dance: Meanings and Makings* has been especially valuable in envisioning a project that engages continuously with queer theory and the processes of rehearsing, making, and performing dance. Croft argues that "Scholars of queer dance defy traditional disciplinary and methodological divides, refusing divisions among history, ethnography, and theory—camps that have always been undermined by assumptions about gender, sexuality, and race that should be made visible and reimagined" (p. 20). I follow this interdisciplinary example, engaging with ethnographic accounts of Cartesian duality, my own embodied history as a dancer, my ongoing dance-making practices, and the theoretical frameworks from queer and feminist scholars; these sources, and my interpretations of them, do not always work cooperatively but generate productive tensions and contradictions.

In my first chapter, "Intuitive Knowing, Sensing, Being in the Academy," I introduce intuition as a term that has been utilized by the academy, especially the Sciences, as a binary opposition to reason, objectivity, and rigor. Psychology has aimed to get to the root, or truth, of

intuition through "phenomenological definitions," such as that offered by Seymour Epstein (2010); he articulates intuition as "a sense of knowing without knowing how one knows" (p. 296). I recuperate this definition, engaging with its internal paradox, in order to critique the essentialist notion that there is an innate truth to intuition and in order to argue in favor of moving away from practices of static definition. Jane Gallop (1988), Susan Bordo (1986), and Donna Haraway (1988) provide particularly valuable accounts regarding knowledge production as always embodied, always subjective, and more generative for being so. The chapter ends with an exploration of nondualism as a means of prioritizing queer forms of knowing as knowledges that refuse to reify the binaries offered by academic and mainstream discourses. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's (2003) thinking on nondualism frames my argument regarding intuition as knowledge that occupies many contradictory sites for critique, theory, and meaning-making. This guides my call—which is in conversation with Audre Lorde's (2000) theory of the erotics—to understand queer knowing as a looking for *more*, for *more* than the categorizations offered by a heteronormative mainstream.

The second chapter, "Intuitively Queer Knowing Through *Disidentifications*" introduces Muñoz's (1999) theoretical work on identity formation, placing it alongside my understanding of intuition as a more-than-rational form of knowing. I explore Muñoz's notion of pre-out consciousness as an example of intuitive, disidentificatory knowing that also challenges notions of linear time; Muñoz's intuitions as a pre-out subject shaped his theorizing, grounding it in a personal account of queer knowing. In order to elucidate this crossing of time, I develop post-out consciousness as a framework for understanding how subject formation occurs in relation to past, present, and future selves. Jessica Benjamin's (1990) notion of intersubjectivity is integral to my argument, and supports my discussion of Gomez's (1996) *MGisPW&G*, as interpreted by

Muñoz. I describe this sketch as an example of intuitively queer knowing and of comedy as a mode of performance that engages multiple meanings and interpretations. I similarly describe another of Gomez's sketches, *jaywalker*—written on by Gretchen Sauer (2002)—as an opportunity for understanding and disidentifying through comedy. Comedy, in its resistance to stable ontologies, figures prominently within my understanding of performance work as a facilitator of looking for and desiring *more*.

My third chapter, "Queer Dance, Intuitive Making," functions as an application of my dance practices to the theoretical groundwork that I have established in the first two chapters, building upon how I understand dance as a way of seeing, feeling, and being *more* than what the mainstream tells us that we are supposed to. I discuss my dance capstone, "returning, again," as a practice of intuitive knowing through dance composition. I include a description of the dance itself and the process of its creation, exploring how intuitive knowing emerges through interpretation as a viewer and shaping as a choreographer. My own formative memory of queer self-formation informs my discussion; this particular memory is of an episode of the MTV television show that aired from 2006 until 2010, *Parental Control*. The episode in question features Naomi and Lexi, a queer couple who resist Naomi's parents attempts to break them up and, as far as I am aware, was the first queer representation to which I had been exposed. I also include an all-too-brief overview of Ballroom culture of the 1980s and especially Willi Ninja as a key player in the Ball scene; known as the grandfather of Vogue, Willi Ninja has deeply inspired my notion of queer glamor and how it can be explored within and communicated through dance. Finally, alongside Croft's (2017) work in *Queer Dance*, I theorize my collaborative rehearsal process as a site of intuitively queer knowing, one that explores queer glamor through movement and generates unstable, queer representations that cross space and time.

This thesis is an ultimately incomplete record of my explorations over the past two semesters, engaging with my embodied history as a queer dancer and writer. The central theme of looking for, feeling, sensing, being *more* emerges throughout my discussions of intuition, disidentification, and movement and ultimately reflects my ardent, potentially naive, belief that, as Muñoz (2009) articulates, queerness is "always in the horizon" (p. 11).[2] Holding onto, even insisting on, queerness as something that must exist in the—our—future need not be a complete disavowal of negativity; instead, we may find *more* through generative relationships between positive and negative representations, through the disidentificatory potentials that they offer, and through insisting to keep on wearing our wigs.

[2] One of the many reasons why I feel drawn to Muñoz's theorizing—and choose to lean upon his thinking significantly more than that of Edelman—emerges from my work with queer kids, both in a residential mental health facility in Frederic, Wisconsin and with Translate Gender—a non-profit based in Northampton, Massachusetts. Again, I do not intend to establish a binary between an essential negative and positive in queer studies, but I appreciate that the positive is more accessible, and certainly more usable, in Muñoz's work; I feel that I could not disavow the positive because the kids with whom I have worked and built friendships have taught me that queerness must exist in the future, and more specifically, in their futures. I have been and am eternally impressed by the resilience and creativity of queer children, of their ability to create vibrantly queer ways of being in the world. Refusing to imagine and hope queer futures, even in a theoretical sense, feels like an impossibility at this moment in my life and engagements with queer theory given these past experiences.

CHAPTER ONE: Intuitive Knowing, Sensing, Being in the Academy

Intuition is an ephemeral, ambiguous, hard-to-describe form of knowing, sensing, and feeling; although my thesis is about intuition, I have struggled to write about it throughout this process and do not explicitly define it at any point. I understand my descriptions of intuition and intuitive research methods to be suggestions or invitations, but never definitions of exactly what intuition is or can do. In this way, I prioritize the interpretive powers of readers in gleaning what intuition can be and do for them from my writing. However, definition is made to be deeply important in many academic traditions, including psychology, and there has been no shortage of attempts to define intuition. In his article, "Demystifying Intuition: What It Is, What It Does, and How It Does It," Seymour Epstein (2010) aims to do just that—to demystify and define the psychology of intuition. Looking at intuition broadly, Epstein presents a "phenomenological definition" of intuition as "a sense of knowing without knowing how one knows" (p. 296). He goes on to elucidate the psychological and cognitive underpinnings of intuition, describing intuition within the context of his cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST) which posits an intuitive/automatic learning system in contrast to a rational/analytic system. Whereas the intuitive system is largely nonverbal, hedonic, and motivated by emotions, the rational system acts more slowly and through conscious mental effort, eternally working; the rational system assesses initial, intuitive responses to stimuli in order to ensure that a context-appropriate response will prevail. Here, the binary—which I understand as a false binary—that persists between what we refer to as rational, or analytic, thinking and intuition reifies binaries (subjectivity vs. objectivity, ambiguity vs. knowability) that are structurally present in academic settings that I will discuss in this chapter.

Epstein (2010) is one of many psychologists dealing in personality, behavior, and cognitive research who has strived for a codified system of intuition or, in other words, the creation of clear, predictable, and universal rules regarding how it operates.[3] Psychological research provides myriad definitions of an intuitive reasoning system that reflect this desire to know, see, and study intuition.[4] Instead of allowing intuition to be defined by the singularity that accompanies lived, personal experiences this research dismisses intuition as a valid form of knowledge. For example, Epstein's CEST is presented as a solution to the "unresolved problems concerning intuition" (p. 296). He goes on to describe these "problems" as results of contradictory findings in psychological research regarding how to best conceptualize intuition, how intuitive thinking contrasts with an analytic, deliberate reasoning system, and how emotion and belief systems may motivate intuition. Looking at the importance of affect on intuitive thinking, Epstein notes that while many researchers prefer a cognitive view of intuition and dismiss the role of affect in its realization, others hold that affective states, their causes, and their aftereffects are key to understanding intuition.[5] Thus, intuition as a psychological concept has created a minefield of contradiction within the psychological work that has attempted to demystify it. I would argue that the points of contention between researchers—and the ambiguity

[3] Contemporary psychological literature on intuition often provides frameworks for understanding it and, like Epstein's (2010) work, presents models for measuring intuition in an individual's responses to stimuli. In Gigerenzer's (2007) *Gut Feelings: The Intelligence of the Unconscious*, intuition is explained as a system of heuristics that maps fairly neatly onto particular social situations. Dörfler & Ackermann (2012) distinguish between intuitive judgment and intuitive insight, and model "good" intuition as that which is gained through expert knowledge (p. 550). Frederick's (2005) Cognitive Reflection Test (CRT) is based on a two-system model of decision making which differentiates between intuitive and analytical systems; the CRT measures one's ability to recognize, but then override, an intuitive but incorrect answer to a word problem and ultimately produce the correct answer.

[4] Beyond the psychological perspective, affect theory provides alternative readings and definitions of intuition. Although traces of affect theory emerge throughout this thesis, especially in my later engagements with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's theorizing, I do not work with and through this approach to critical theory as closely as I do with and through that of psychology. Much of this is due to my own academic trajectory as a psychology major and my engagements with cognitive and developmental psychology; nonetheless, I recognize that there are rich sites of overlap between affect theory and my conception of intuition, and potentials for much future engagement.

[5] Psychologists who purport the value of affect in intuitive thinking include Slovic et al. (2002) on affect heuristics and Chen & Chaiken (1999) on a heuristic-systematic model of reasoning. Researchers who do not include affect as a part of their definition of intuition include Santangelo & Kryjevskaia (2023) who explore intuition as a tool for problem solving within classroom settings.

within psychology regarding this concept—are the "problem" in this case. I believe that Epstein's description of intuition as a "problem" and the offering of his own "phenomenological definition" is telling of the desire within psychology to get to the root, or the truth, of intuition (p. 296).

This goal of discovering concealed, but innate, knowable "truths" is present within many disciplines and across academic settings; the pressure to identify truth is a side effect of the omnipresence of Cartesian rationalism in Western academia. Within Scientific research, the expectation is typically that researchers maintain objectivity in order to maintain legitimacy, both of their work and of their positions in their field. I appreciate Epstein's short definition of intuition—"a sense of knowing without knowing how one knows"—because it is a paradox (2010, p. 296). How can we know something without knowing it? Understanding this definition as paradoxical allows intuition to be a bit mysterious and difficult (perhaps even impossible) to describe in generalizing terms. This definition loses its potential to hold ambiguity and mystery only when Epstein goes on to codify the workings of intuition through a model with accompanying psychological measures.[6]

Objectivity in the quest for "truth" in this case, as I will further extrapolate later on, extinguishes the potential for intuition to be ambiguous in its invocation of particular, multiple truths. Although I am not interested in placing a value judgment on psychology and its contributions to understanding intuition, I believe that feminist and queer paradigms regarding knowing, sensing, and feeling provide generative opportunities for understanding and working with intuition, both in academic settings and elsewhere. These paradigms allow intuition to hold onto ambiguity by centering intuitive knowing as an embodied, subjective, and deeply personal

[6] In combination with CEST, Epstein presents his Constructive Thinking Inventory (CTI) and Rational/Experiential Inventory (REI) in order to measure the efficiency of intuitive reasoning and the usage of the intuitive (experiential) compared to the analytic (rational) reasoning systems, respectively.

phenomenon, also challenging the illusion that knowledge can (and should) exist in disembodied and impersonal forms. Intuition challenges claims of objectivity and the mind-body dualism posited by rationalist and empiricist perspectives, instead prioritizing the widely undervalued knowledge of the body. Although its connections to the body have fueled the academic project of delegitimizing intuition as a knowledge form, I believe that the power and usefulness of intuition emerge in these associations. Feminist and queer theory provide openings for intuition to be understood as not only an inevitable part of human cognition, but as a usable, valuable tool that affirms identities and experiences. That is the focus of my second chapter, but further background regarding the position of intuition within academic institutions is necessary to elucidate the challenges that accompany working on, with, and through intuition in these settings. Additionally, I do not intend to essentialize "academia" as a static, singular institution of power that necessitates resistance in the broadest sense; the academy plays a much more complex role in my thinking about resistance and practices that prioritize marginalized forms of knowledge.

Academic Thinking, Making, Being

From my own experiences as a student at Mount Holyoke College, pressures to gain "mastery" of a particular subject or field are prevalent, even in an institution that has strived to legitimize marginalized knowledges, diverse ways of knowing, and interdisciplinary study. Many of my friends and classmates who have engaged primarily in the arts and humanities during their college educations have mentioned familial and social pressures to balance their studies with classes, a minor, or another major in a STEM or adjacent discipline. A recent conversation with Professor Diewald involved a discussion of science as a justification for the marginalized knowledges that emerge and hold value within other fields (including but not limited to dance

and gender studies, two of my primary areas of study). This reveals a pattern of inequality regarding how disciplines and their respective methodologies are valued within academic settings—whereas the fields designated as scientific are privileged and justified, fields in the arts and humanities are undervalued and often require justification for their inclusion in institutions, academic tracks, and interdisciplinary projects.[7]

I argue that, in the words of Subramaniam & Willey (2017) in their introduction to the "Science Out of Feminist Theory" edition of *Catalyst*, arts and humanities—such as feminist studies in their case—are often positioned as "beneficiar[ies] of Scientific Data" (p. 11). In other words, feminist paradigms, research methods, and knowledge claims are understood as improved and made more legitimate by the inclusion of findings that are academically-approved as Scientific.[8] For many students, including study of the Sciences satisfies academic and familial pressures to stay "practical" in their studies.[9] These pressures emerge as a result of the Cartesian logic that dominates academic institutions and their curricula, validating some forms of knowledge and ways of communicating knowledge while dismissing others. Subramanian & Willey further explore this issue as a colonial project, one that operates through processes of

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[7] My first draft of this first chapter had centered psychological perspectives on intuition, i.e. how psychologists have defined intuition through empirical research. Both Professor Diewald and Professor Gundermann encouraged me to avoid giving these ideas so much space in my argument because intuitive knowledge as it emerges in queer theory and dance practices do not require justification. The psychological research that I include in this thesis supports my ability to engage in the challenging, slippery task of exploring intuition in writing and, in many cases, determine how intuition can be reframed.This inclusion also marks my own engagement with Psychology at Mount Holyoke and my belief that (as argued by Subramaniam & Willey, 2017), interdisciplinary work involves a negotiation between disciplines that hold unequal value within academia. This negotiation blurs the boundaries between disciplines (without neglecting the structural and discursive inequalities that persist between them), challenging the illusory superiority that Science holds in comparison to other perspectives and ways of knowing.

[8] Subramaniam & Willey discuss Sandra Harding's (1991) approach to capitalizing Science to refer to it as the "legitimizing apparatus of various institutions" (p. 10). In contrast, the lower-case "sciences" refers to forms of knowing and knowledge claims that are not supported by an academic institution and that do not operate through controlling, legitimizing discourse regarding what sciences should be. I utilize this distinction in capitalization to emphasize Science's position as an outgrowth of colonial subjugation, erasure, and categorization in contrast to the generative possibilities offered through scientific work.

[9] By "practical" I refer to both academic standards of what is pragmatic and sensible (read rational) to spend one's time studying and to turn into a career. I also use "practical" to emphasize the irony of the word as it functions to delegitimize dance as a field of study in the academy despite the fact that dance is one of the most, literally, practical disciplines; dance engages constant, bodily practice to generate knowledges.

invalidation regarding knowledges that challenge Eurocentrism and white solipsism[10] as guiding forces in the production of academically-approved knowledges; the authors write that Science was established by colonial powers through marking certain forms of knowing as "unscientific, backward, pseudoscience, magical, or more recently categorized as 'alternative' or 'indigenous'" (2017, p. 7). Here, labeling supports the colonial project of erasure, reifying Western prejudices against certain peoples and communities and thus the knowledges that they produce. In this way, "naturalized Science *and* naturalized inequality" are inevitably and eternally co-constitutive in the academic settings that privilege Western traditions and canons (2017, p. 7).

Regarding intuition, Scientific study—primarily through psychological work on cognition and consciousness—similarly supports the academic project of knowledge validation; interpretations of intuition and intuitive thinking have a rich history within feminist and queer theorizing, but oftentimes are not legitimized within academic settings; through necessitating a scientific complement to studies of intuition in feminist and queer fields, the contributions of these fields are effectively marginalized and intuition as a concept and research practice is similarly marginalized. Looking to another instance of how the academy reproduces standards of exclusion, Jack Halberstam (2011) articulates how language reifies disciplinary boundaries, especially those that distinguish between Scientific and non-Scientific fields in the *The Queer Art of Failure*. Halberstam writes:

> terms like serious and rigorous tend to be code words, in academia as well as other contexts, for disciplinary correctness; they signal a form of training and learning that confirms what is already known according to approved methods of knowing, but they do not allow for visionary insights or flights of fancy (p. 6).

[10] Adrienne Rich defines white solipsism in "Disloyal to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynephobia" (1979) as the perspective that whiteness is a universal default, one that shapes racial identification into a binary between whiteness and non-whiteness; non-whiteness homogenizes the experiences of individuals and communities of color, defining them in relation and/or in contrast to white individuals.

Alternatives to these "approved methods of knowing" are thus labeled as lacking in rigor and seriousness, supporting arguments regarding why certain disciplines and projects should not receive institutional support or funding. As Subramaniam & Willey (2017) argue, the colonial project of institutional control in order to maintain a Scientific status quo—specifically regarding the centrality of white male perspectives—translates into limitations on what academic scholarship is able and allowed to do.

Intuition—and other concepts that hold glimpses of intuitive thinking through prioritizing embodiment and/or subjectivity—presents a challenge to the underlying colonial agendas of the academy given its longstanding associations with the body. Cartesian dualism posits that mind and body are inevitably separate and that the rational mind exerts control over the irrational body. As I will argue, the privileging of intuitive thought in marginalized knowledges (those that exist in undervalued academic fields *and* those that are present within disenfranchised communities) serve as further justification to dismiss intuitive thought as lacking in rigor. This also contributes to the perceived illegibility of intuition in Scientific contexts for, although psychologists have attempted to codify the logic of intuition as a cognitive process, it is still not viewed as a valid approach to working and producing knowledge. I argue that intuition provides rich possibilities for knowing, working, and being in the world that challenge Scientific norms and expectations; thus, intuition emerges as both a fruitful interdisciplinary area of study and as a viable research method that reworks notions of engaging in rigorous work. Potentials for "visionary insights or flights of fancy" live and persist, I believe, most saliently in the arts and humanities, especially in dance and feminist studies. Through my work in these fields I have found opportunities for engaging, rigorously, in ways that are certainly unserious and simultaneously resist "approved methods of knowing"(Halberstam, 2011, p. 6).

Throughout my thesis, I hold onto Epstein's (2010) definition of intuition as "a sense of knowing without knowing how one knows," not because my thinking is aligned with his own in terms of philosophy and theory, but because this definition frames intuition as inevitably linked to the projects of knowledge and knowing (p. 296). By dividing this definition into three segments, several of the particular systemic and institutional methods of devaluing intuition can be further elucidated and I am able to further articulate some of the challenges that accompany writing about, reflecting on, and researching intuition in academic settings. Looking at the beginning, "a sense of knowing," refers to the physical experience of intuiting; I understand this as a call to intuition's intrinsic connection to the body and to embodiment. Although all forms of knowing are embodied, intuitive knowing problematizes the predominance of mind-body dualism in academia and the ways in which this dualism has been weaponized to restrict certain perspectives and discursive potentials in these spaces. The second segment, "without knowing," reflects intuition's origins within bodily, non-verbal knowledge. In the academy, the conscious, rational mind is privileged for its connection to rigorous study, objective perspectives, and masculinity, as well as its role in containing and confining the irrational body. These approaches have dominated academic discourse and shaped perceptions of allowable research methods and how we understand ourselves as researchers with our projects. Finally, "how one knows" invokes the challenge of communicating—through verbal or written language—the contents of an intuition or the process of intuiting. Logocentrism has rendered many stories and histories that are not recorded in traditional methods illegible; intuition faces similar challenges and subversively validates knowledge that has not been and/or cannot be recorded through traditional avenues. In the following three sections, I further explore these areas and what they mean for

conducting research through and with intuition, especially that which prioritizes my own dance-based knowledge.

"A Sense of Knowing Without Knowing How One Knows"

Always Embodied

Cartesian philosophy necessitates a division between mind and body, where the former holds the capacity for invention and analysis; the latter is denied and constrained so as not to disrupt the workings of the mind. Here a "sense of knowing" can be understood as the mind's ability to know and to reason despite the presence of a physical body (Epstein, 2010, p. 296). Jane Gallop (1988) writes on (dis)embodiment extensively in *Thinking Through the Body*, a collection of essays that explore mind-body dualism, knowledge as always embodied, and capacities for thinking intentionally with and through the body. Gallop analogizes the Cartesian cut as a literal decapitation, a severing of the knowing head from the excessive body. She situates this approach to knowledge within the historical context of early modern European philosophers (such as that of Descartes) and states:

> Rather than treat the body as a site of knowledge, a medium for thought, the more classical philosophical project has tried to render it transparent and get beyond it, to dominate it by reducing it to the mind's idealizing categories (pp. 3-4).

This need to "get beyond" the body, to make the body a non-agential object of study that is distinct from the one doing the actual studying (the mind, or the true subject) is the aim of Cartesian philosophy. Here, binary approaches to objectivity and subjectivity emerge to reify the divide between mind and body. Pure objectivity implies the study of an object that is not influenced by the attitudes, values, and preferences (and certainly not the body) of a subject; this approach supposedly yields inherent, universal truths about objects that are verifiable and

valuable for Scientific study, ensuring that the field remains untouched by the desires, needs, and idiosyncrasies of physical form.

In her essay "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspectives," Donna Haraway (1988) terms unrestricted, detached objectivity as the "god trick" (p. 581). This trick allows privileged groups to generate knowledge from a body-less position, a position that assumes their perspectives and experiences are a universal norm. Haraway also explains how the binary of (dis)embodiment functions as a strategy for invalidating already marginalized individuals and communities. These individuals and communities do not have the privilege of disembodied knowledge production—they are the "embodied others" (othered in comparison to the European white male norm) who are "not allowed to not have a body" (p. 575). Thus, the knowledge claims produced by "embodied others" are delegitimized within Cartesian-minded institutions.

Feminist scholars including Haraway and Gallop challenge the reality of a mind-body divide through the argument that all knowledge is always embodied; knowledge is always produced from a body that has been in relation to other bodies that are also in relation to broader social, political, and cultural contexts. Gallop (1988) articulates the inherence of embodiment in her statement that "The body is enigmatic because it is not a creation of the mind" (p. 18). This claim challenges the rationalist underpinnings of the academy, usurping its ability to present the body as an object that is only conceivable through the mind; the "transparent" body is thus revealed to be a myth, a construction that serves the agendas of those in power (p. 3-4). What can the academy do with the body if it cannot be reduced to "a creation of the mind"? By centering the relationship between body and mind, the power of the mind is called into question and the order of the academy is disrupted. We can rework this relationship through understanding that

the body is matter-*full* in the sense that its physical presence is undeniable in the project of knowledge production and in the sense that the body *matters* within this project. Simultaneously, the mind is also matter-*full*, despite Cartesian notions that it is able to transcend its own physical matter. Gallop works through her role as a female academic in *Thinking Through the Body*, understanding the female to be the "embodied other" of the male in academia (Haraway, 1988, p. 575). She describes her need to displace a prototypical male academic, revealing his own always embodied position and thus challenging his authority:

> My desire to be an academic, intellectual speaker is a desire to speak from the father's place. Yet the spiritual father's place… demands separation of ideas from desire, a disembodied mind. I want to expose the father's desire so that I could take his place but as a sexed subject. If the intellectual, the cleric, epitomizes the life of the mind, woman epitomizes the life of the body. To be a woman intellectual necessitates an attack on the supposed objectivity and transcendence of the thinker (Gallop, 1988, p. 21).

Essentially, Gallop proposes a transformation of the academic role into one that considers knowledge as always embodied; the undeniability of her own "sexed" body thus becomes a tool to advance the notion of body and thinker as one and the same. Gallop's femaleness is what establishes her as an "embodied other" in the academy but, in this case, also emphasizes the absurdity that the thinker's body (whatever gender it may be and identities it may hold) is uninvolved in the production of knowledge (Haraway, 1988, p. 575). Transcendence of the body itself is therefore an unreality, one that promises validity in the academy and reifies structures of oppression that keep certain communities in academic, knowledge-producing power and others in positions of academic marginalization. Of course, these structures—although they have very real implications for marginalized voices in academia—do not represent an inherent truth of the human relationship to knowing that affords some the privilege of disembodiment and some the prison of embodiment.

Intuitions, like all other forms of knowledge, are always embodied and do not promise transcendence of the physical form. Instead, they promise knowledge productions originating from a particular body that exists within a particular time and place. Intuitions reflect the knowledges and desires that live in the body; here, the matter of the body often drives intuitions, making them matter in relation to the body's physical form and its physical position. In this way, intuitions can be best understood through the framework of Haraway's (1988) situated knowledges. Defining feminist objectivity as a welcoming of the partiality of perspectives, Haraway explains that "objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiment and definitely not about the false vision promising transcendence of all limits and responsibility" (pp. 582-3). Embodiment is central here, problematizing the dominance of the mind and the submission of the body in knowledge projects. Intuitions may appear to emerge instantaneously, without the interference of conscious mental processes, but are also never isolated from the mind. Like an automatic knee-jerk response, intuitions appear as a result of particular bodily knowledge in a particular context that also calls to the past, collective experiences of a body and mind—to the declarative and nondeclarative memories stored in the mind-body system.

For example, my intuition and its activation of the knowledge of my body collected from years of dance training facilitates my ability to dance improvisationally. My intuition leads me back again and again to movements that feel physically good and/or familiar to me, therefore drawing on the particular preferences of my particular body and my history as a student of dance. The knowledge of how to do these movements and how they feel is essentially inseparable from my declarative knowledge of them (i.e., my conscious ability to teach them to someone else). Mind and body are never separate entities within the quick decision-making required in dance improvisation, nor are they separate in other domains of decision-making or knowledge

production. The associations between intuition and the body undermine the validity of intuition in academic settings, also contributing to the undervaluing of the disciplines—such as dance studies and somatics—that prioritize embodiment most explicitly. Yet, intuition is powerful because it draws on the traces of past experiences of the mind and body, calling to what is pleasurable and easeful, perhaps dwelling in spaces of discomfort and challenge to explore what is unfamiliar to this system. Intuitions, especially as I have found in improvisation, are also inevitably shaped by who else is in the room; I find that certain possibilities emerge for my dancing body only when I am improvising in relation to another body. Together, these pieces create an intuitive response to a particular situation or context, one that is always embodied and draws from the knowledge of the mind-body.

Rethinking Rationality

Beyond the mind-body binary posited by Cartesian rationality, the masculine-feminine binary provides meaningful, gendered nuance to the Western project of knowledge production and to Cartesianism itself. This is a philosophy grounded in androcentrism, in the notion of masculine as default and woman as other (Bordo, 1986; Mozeley & McPhillips, 2019). Understanding intuition as knowing "without knowing," calls to the strategies by which knowledge production is filtered through gendered lenses of interpretation (Epstein, 2010, p. 296). Cartesian perspectives provide an illusory privilege of knowing to (White, educated, wealthy, and typically male) academics and invalidate the voices of others who do not fit these criteria, depicting their insights as a lack or absence of knowing. In "The Cartesian Masculinization of Thought," Susan Bordo (1986) articulates Cartesianism this explicit privileging of the masculine:

> "Masculine" describes not a biological category but a cognitive style, an epistemological stance. Its key term is detachment: from the emotional life, from the particularities of

> time and place, from personal quirks, prejudices, and interests, and most centrally, from the object itself (p. 451).

Femininity appears here as the (literal) embodiment of irrelevance and of instability, in contrast to the stable and ordered masculine. Understanding masculinity as an "epistemological stance" in conjunction with detachment communicates the objectivity-subjectivity binary that developed in parallel to that regarding the mind and body. In summary, the masculine objective holds power over the feminine subjective in that it holds epistemological superiority and thus a claim to "truth."

In their article, "Knowing Otherwise: Restorying Intuitive Knowing as Feminist Resistance," Fee Mozeley and Kathleen McPhillips (2019) invoke Michel Foucault's notion that "truth" is generated and sustained within and by institutions and structures of power that further support the spreading of this "truth." Academic institutions hold this approach to knowing in their policies, expectations, and organization, thus strengthening and continually reproducing Cartesian duality through the subjects that progress through these institutions. For example, the focus on engaging in objective, replicable research in the Sciences reproduces notions of detachment as vital and achievable in the production of academically valid work. My invoking of reproduction is influenced by Bordo's (1986) articulation of Cartesian rationality as a "*re*-birthing and re-imaging of knowledge and the world as masculine" (p. 441). The use of the prefix *re*- here articulates one of the motivations behind this system, specifically that of reworking the world through a logic of masculine detachment, therefore erasing originary associations with femininity; the father supersedes the place of the mother. Bordo further articulates this as the desire to "start anew, alone, without influence from the past or other people, with the guidance of reason alone" (1986, p. 448). Thus, the reproductive capacities

associated with femininity are usurped by Cartesianism, allowing for epistemological systems to be *re*-configured through and with the masculine.

Similarly, it is telling that the expression goes "women's intuition" when describing an instance of knowing that cannot be supported through an objective, rational, or empirical explanation. Mozeley & McPhillips (2019) conclude that "a binary analysis confirms that intuitive ways of knowing have been, and continue to be, devalued, silenced, and dismissed as irrational, emotional, and feminine within dominant systems of knowledge production" (p. 846). Thus, the discursive associations between body, femininity, and intuition in the academy function as strategies of delegitimization through their opposition to a Cartesian world. Intuition also becomes the binary opposition to reason in this case, for it undermines the impression of a divide between object and subject; intuition encompasses "personal quirks, prejudices, and interests" that simultaneously blur this division and emphasize that the subject's great relevance in any and all projects of knowing (Bordo, 1986, p. 451). Thus, transcendence of the feminine involves, in Bordo's (1986) words, turning "she" into "it," and "'it' can be understood. Not through sympathy, of course, but by virtue of the very *object*-ivity of the 'it'" (p. 452). Transforming woman as gendered "others" into objects in relation to masculine subjects thus renders women as studiable and incapable of detaching themselves from their physical, sexed bodies. In this way, binary gender masquerades as a marker of valid academic knowledge, further reifying binaries between knowing subjects and unknowing, inagential objects.

Going beyond binary notions of masculinity and femininity, and instead understanding knowledge production as intrinsically tied to the gendered philosophies and associations of Western academia, is vital to the interpretation of intuition that I put forward. Knowing is in no way detached from one's own relationship to gender and to their own body that is gendered and

sexed through cultural and symbolic systems. Mozeley & McPhillips (2019) describe that, "Experiences of knowing intuitively are multifaceted and can intersect with the formation and expression of self-determined identities" (p. 855). I argue that it is vital to acknowledge that these identities influence and are influenced by personal intuitions; I would reword Mozeley & McPhillips statement to say that intuitive knowing does, always, "intersect with the formation and expression of self-determined identities." "Self-determined" identification also brings up the issue of how identities are socially constructed and culturally reproduced in a way that makes a subject and its constitution over time inextricable from their historical, geopolitical context; at the same time as we shape ourselves and determine our own identities, we are implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) shaped by context which, of course, also includes other agents who may reify or resist mainstream opportunities for identification. This is not to say that the subject has no agency in processes of self-formation, but that this agency is molded by the identificatory (im)possibilities offered by the regimes of "truth" that operate in their world.

Audre Lorde's (2000) "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" is helpful in articulating personal intuitive knowing and its interrelation with identities that shift and evolve over time. Erotics, for Lorde, emerge as knowing and feeling that "lies in a deeply female and spiritual plane," and calls women-identified individuals (especially those who hold additional marginalized identities) to strive for the actualization of satisfaction, empowerment, and resistance to the social forces that aim to subjugate certain voices and bodies (p. 53). Lorde discusses the phrase, "It feels right to me," and how it "acknowledges the strength of the erotic into a true knowledge, for what that means is the first and most powerful guiding light toward any understanding" (p. 56). Through Lorde's theory of the erotic, the basis of truth is created in and by the subject through their identities, experiences, and the resulting relations that

emerge—prioritizing and validating the subject as identity-*full* allows one to create their own ways of knowing and being as an agential subject. Like Lorde's erotics, intuition lives in bodies that are all too often demanded to deny their own presence and legitimacy. My body has not experienced denials of presence and legitimacy to the extent that Lorde refers to in her work, and I recognize this as a particularly generative point of divergence that signifies the situatedness of our respective perspectives. Turning away from the Cartesian philosophy of masculine detachment enables a move towards the view that subject and object are unable to exist without one another and that, in other words, divergences are the stuff of—not a hindrance to—generative theorizing. By moving away from this view, I do not intend to move blindly towards the feminine as a perspective that values intuition, embodiment, and subjectivity nor essentialize Lorde's perspective as one that encapsulates the diversity of experiences of Black women. I also do not invoke Lorde's work here in order to propose a reversal of knowledge hierarchies that would place women, notions of the erotic, and intuition in the position of power. Instead, I argue that intuitions are productions of intersecting identifications and relationships to the mainstream identity categories offered to us, emphasizing that our experiences of knowing are enmeshed in our identity-*full* and matter-*full* selves. The experience that "It feels right to me"—whatever "it" may be—has roots in one's embodied history of lived identity and experience is a key piece of understanding intuition as a powerful form of knowing, one that subverts the Cartesian illusion of detachment in favor of complex, intersecting, and often collective webs of being and knowing.

Non-Verbal Knowledges

The end of Epstein's (2010) definition of intuition refers to "how one knows," which I understand as reference to the evidence and support for an experience of knowing (p. 296).

Problematizing the binary division between mind and body offered by Cartesianism does not necessarily involve a conflation of them. Mind and body offer differing sensations, different ways of being in relation to the world that ultimately merge to produce the experiences of being and knowing as an embodied human. The physical feelings of embodiment may escape the language-generating capacity of the mind that allows thoughts to be communicated through verbal or written word; some sensations or moments of knowing escape language, and can only be indirectly communicated through metaphor. For example, the experience of dance improvisation (for me) typically occurs in the absence of language and is followed by an inability to explain why I made particular choices. My reasons for movement in specific ways often evade my ability to record or share them. I am left with traces of knowing and remembering how I experienced them, perhaps an awareness of where I first learned certain steps, but an inability to explicitly explain the full experience of improvisation. Perhaps I can describe a particular improvisation as feeling "like a wave that rises and falls on a larger, surrounding sea" but this is a metaphor, not the embodied event itself. Thus, I am also unable to communicate the intuitions that emerged and dispersed through my body during the movement process.[11]

The ways in which intuitions evade verbal and written articulation increase the challenge of studying and describing intuition, especially in the context of Western academic institutions. Written records are unable to capture in full the complexities of an artwork, a feeling, a cultural

[11] I appreciate Ann Cvetkovich's (2003) thoughts in *An Archive of Feeling: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Culture* regarding how archives are not necessarily literal repositories that hold tangible and recorded materials. Instead, "archives of feeling" may exist as the ephemeral notions, affective associations, and disruptions of memory that are associated with particular events or ideas (p. 7). The ephemeral existence of my improvisations in my memory, my feelings about the improvisation, the memories of viewers, my journaling practice, and conversations about an improvisation exist are not a traditional archive, but certainly make up an archive of feeling.

story yet logocentrism posits that only the written word holds true, lasting authority.[12] The recording of knowledge allows for an illusion of control and stability to proliferate from and throughout academic archives; the pressure for knowledge to be recorded and recordable creates inequities within archives, which reify some truths through the inclusion and accessibility of particular records and dismiss others through exclusion. Non-verbal knowledges of particular cultures and embodied experiences within particular cultural contexts are omitted from the logocentric archive of academia; verbal stories, for example, that have no orthographic complement are never recorded in the first place. Additionally, stories that challenge white, Eurocentric, and heterosexist claims to power are literally and violently erased from archives. Non-written and non-recorded work therefore emerges as a failure within academic archives, a failure to be detached from one's own object of study to the extent to which it may exist outside of the subject as a written record, an object that can be studied by future academics.

In this way, my engagements with intuition are a partial failure through the perspective of the academy. My reading and application of intuition in queer self-formations (in the second chapter) and dance-making practices (in the third) does not include a clear instructional model regarding how to engage with and/or record intuition as a research method. Although I am writing extensively about intuition in this thesis, much of the work completed in preparation for and during the writing process involved working through intuition in a dance context. My pages and pages of journal entries about these experiences do not make my intuitive process nor the realization of my intuitions legible—neither to myself nor to another reader. The intrinsic challenge of communicating about intuition makes intuition largely illegible, especially in the logocentric academy. In Halberstam's (2011) words, "Illegibility may in fact be one way of

[12] Jacques Derrida's (1967) *Of Grammatology*—which was translated by Gayatri Spivak (2016)—presents "logocentrism" as the notion that language can represent external reality and that the written word is superior to other types of record and recording;

escaping the political manipulation to which all university fields and disciplines are subject" (2011, p. 10). I believe that intuition presents such a strategy for working around this "political manipulation," for its illegibility resists stable definition and codification into replicable, specific research practices by academic disciplines. Intuition fails to be usable by the regimes of "truth" that monitor, design, and prune academic archives and determine the boundaries of academic disciplines. Illegibility, in this case, decreases the visibility of intuition, allowing it to be understood as insignificant and therefore unthreatening.

The power that I believe actually emerges from the partial invisibility and illegibility of intuition are also tied to Halberstam's (2011) conception of low theory, or "the name for a counterhegemonic form of theorizing, the theorization of alternatives within an undisciplined zone of knowledge production" is another means of conceptualizing intuition as an evader of verbal and written communication (p. 18). Low theory resists the demands of the academy and academic knowledge production, instead opting to utilize materials and strategies that are disallowed within these contexts. In Halberstam's discussion of low theory, he presents the potential for "the utility of getting lost over finding our way" to explain how low theory functions as an illegible alternative to the order of hegemonic modes of knowing that privilege stability and linearity (2011, p. 15). Intuitive knowing that cannot be tied down by spoken or written word invites getting lost, getting stuck in the weeds of how intuition draws on embodied histories, identifications, and their relationship in relation to academic discourses. In the context of identity formation, intuition can create a mess of possibilities for being in the world that resist normative identity categories and instead prioritize mutability; here, intuition can be understood as a queer form of knowing that resists stable categorization over time and place. Low theory is central to my understanding of intuition because it looks beyond the academic archive in order to

generate knowledges and discourses that privilege bodily sensations and the breadth of past work that does not live in written record. Low theory holds that there is more out there, more to explore, in the same way that our intuitions suppose that there are more ways of knowing than we are offered by and within the academy.

The opportunities that I explore for reading, incorporating, and writing with and through intuition throughout this thesis conceptualize intuiting as a project that is both personal and deeply involved in the web of relationships that one has to a broader social context. Intuition is individual in the sense that intentional engagement with it invites reflection on its interrelations with personal experiences, identities, tastes, and values; these facets of the self invariably emerge within specific social, cultural, and political contexts. These reflections need not yield conclusive, articulable claims about the self that assimilate intuition into a categorical and generalizable approach to knowledge production—the ambiguity that intuition offers is welcome, for it this ambiguity that allows intuition to problematize the binaries and strategies for knowing, making, and being in the world put forward by the dominant discourse of the Western academy.

Navigating Nondualism and Embracing the More-Than-Rational

I believe that it is vital to this project to explain some of the systems and institutional norms that stifle and invalidate intuition because it reveals why intuitive thought is a threat to academic values regarding the mind-body divide, rationality, and the centrality of white, Eurocentric perspectives. The inevitable presence of intuition within knowledge claims that are aligned with any and all ideologies imperils the academic project of establishing and maintaining knowledge categories (i.e. disciplines) and hierarchies of power. Describing the structural disavowal of intuition as a legitimate knowledge form also provides background for the slippery negotiation that was writing about intuition in relation to queer theory and movement-based art

in my second and third chapters. I focus—in those chapters—on the project of finding ways to work around the limitations of the academy, and to do so I must articulate how Western academic models of knowledge production inherently delegitimize work that falls under the categories of feminist, queer, and/or movement-based studies especially.

I understand this project as slippery because it runs the risk of reifying the binaries that are already embedded in academic institutions, namely that which defines analytic and objective thinking in comparison to intuitive and subjective formulations. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's (2003) thinking in the introduction to *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, & Performativity* explores the challenges of producing work that resists dualistic thinking and aims to avoid the further reification of discursive binaries. She writes:

> But of course it's far easier to deprecate the confounding, tendentious effects of binary modes of thinking—and to expose their often stultifying perseveration—than it is to articulate or model other structures of thought. Even to invoke nondualism, as plenty of Buddhist sutras point out, is to tumble right into a dualistic trap. I've always assumed that the most useful work of this sort is likeliest to occur near the boundary of what a writer can't figure out how to say readily, never mind prescribe to others (p. 2).

The function of this first chapter is not to identify schools of thought—or the notion of academia as a homogenous entity—that must be vehemently opposed and disavowed in order to engage in an "alternative" project of knowledge formation. I hope to avoid tumbling into a "dualistic trap" by holding that all knowledge projects reflect the intermingling of modes of reasoning (including but not limited to quick, spontaneous gut feelings, deliberate, careful analysis, and modeling of previously observed strategies) that are tangled to such an extent that they cannot be separated from one another. Thus, I argue that intuition is an already (always) present aspect of reasoning and that further reflection regarding how intuition emerges in all reasoning projects provides opportunities for working with it more intentionally.

By no means does my interest in intuition represent a call to over-prioritize intuitive thinking, to view intuition as excluded from critique, or to look to intuition as a means of transcending the dualistic philosophies of Cartesian-minded institutions. As Sedgwick (2003) explains, this would do nothing more than reify the binary between rationalist academic knowledge projects and intuition as a partially non-verbal pseudo-knowledge. Instead, I agree with Sedgwick's notion that work that aims to challenge the omnipotence of dualistic thinking and provide other potential strategies of working is best supported by coming to the edge of what feels possible to express in my writing. Another conversation with Professor Diewald yielded the notion that it is okay, and important, for me to identify that intuition as a concept and an unstable research method are difficult to articulate. Instead of ignoring the challenges present in this project, dwelling on the challenge of writing about intuition is a powerful strategy for my understanding of intuition to simultaneously hold on to ambiguity and to resist academic standards regarding clarity and legibility.

To close this chapter, I look to the work of Mozeley & McPhillips (2019) and Lorde (2000) to discuss how intuition and intuitive knowing can function in feminist research projects. Mozeley & McPhillips use the term "more-than-rational" to describe intuition, understanding it as "an inclusive term to refer to intuitive, instinctual, emotional, affective, embodied, connected, relational and rational ways of knowing and being" (footnote 2, p. 844). This term does not describe intuition as something beyond rational thinking that ultimately leaves it behind, but as a potential for knowing in ways that include, but are not limited to, the rational. I appreciate this definition because it expresses the ambiguity of intuition in the form of its ability to offer *more*—more alternatives to heteronormative ways of identifying oneself, more potentials for resisting binary roles in dance-making processes, and more ways for knowing to challenge the

limitations of academia and its disciplines. Ambiguity is present here because these alternatives and potentials are uncertain and challenging to locate, but are nonetheless worth locating. Like Lorde's erotics, intuition holds the capacity for a knowing and being *more* than what is offered and what is expected. Lorde writes:

> Our erotic knowledge empowers us, becomes a lens through which we scrutinize all aspects of our existence, forcing us to evaluate those aspects honestly in terms of their relative meaning within our lives. And this is a grave responsibility, projected from within each of us, not to settle for the convenient, the shoddy, the conventionally expected, nor the merely safe" (p. 57).

Lorde describes erotics as a source of knowledge that allows us to imagine what *more* may look like and how it may transform our individual and collective experiences into something more fulfilling. Intuition can have a similar function, helping us to think through and beyond the binaries that aim to dominate and control our lives. Intuition reflects the deep knowledges of the mind-body and the desire to live safely, comfortably, and joyfully. In the following chapter, I look to queer theorists, especially José Muñoz, to imagine how intuition supports the process of knowing and being *more* in our queer bodies and communities.

CHAPTER TWO: Intuitively Queer Knowing with *Disidentifications*

Beyond the sphere of academic productions, intuition is more-than-rational in that it can support us in imagining a self that is complicated and contradictory, even impossible, in its identifications according to the ontological distinctions that persist in the mainstream. I believe that Audre Lorde's (2000) words to not "settle for the convenient, the shoddy, the conventionally expected, nor the merely safe" communicates what intuition, in combination with queer theory, can offer queer subjects in particular. I believe that her assertion that "this is a grave responsibility, projected from within each of us" invokes how queer subjects identify and create *more*—more than what heteronormativity offers and attempts to make us believe is desirable (p. 57). Intuition is a potential strategy for dreaming up new strategies of existing within the sphere of the majority and in relation to one another because, again, I believe that our intuitions hold an opportunity for us to know and be *more*. A desire or awareness of *more* need not yield a conscious, nameable strategy of identification that can be articulated, recorded, and replicated; the contradiction, or paradox, of intuition is that, although it presents possibilities of identification that are alternative to heteronormative identifications, these possibilities are not new, or additional, identificatory categories. Queer theorizing is especially applicable to understanding intuition because queer theory privileges identity as specific, particular, and ultimately fragmentary. By embedding the perspectives and productions of queer theorists, artists, and performers within my theory of intuition—and moving away from the compulsion to define it—my work joins a rich history of interdisciplinary and subversive work that conveys intuitively queer sensibilities. "Intuitively queer" is the term that I will utilize throughout the rest of this thesis to refer to moments of recognition that may be indescribable but powerfully enable formations of queer subjectivity and queer community. To me, this term literally refers to the

intuitive feeling or sense that someone or something is queer—queer in the sense of subversive to heteronormativity through identificatory instability.

In this sense, queer maintains a sense of intrinsic instability—it is not a synonym for holding a distinct non-heterosexual identity nor a new category to be added to heteronormative constructions of identity in the first place. Of course, this is the intention of the term and its formulations by queer theorists such as Karen Barad (2012). In "Nature's Queer Performativity," Barad writes on the queerness of the natural world and its "critters," challenging the assumption of a nature-culture divide that denies the agency of the natural world in favor of an anthropocentric perspective. She describes this favoring as exemplary of a "classical ontology," which supposes that "the world is composed of individual objects with determinate properties and boundaries, space is a given volume in which events occur, time is a parameter that advances in linear fashion on its own accord, and effects follow their causes" (pp. 44-45). This ontology generates a version of the world that is ordered regularly and predictably, one that prioritizes the stability of categorization to ensure that independent objects can be reliably understood—one that is organized by philosophies such as Cartesian duality. Barad presents queerness (the queerness of atoms, specifically) as an alternative to this ontology, extrapolating that "Queer is itself a lively mutating organism, a desiring radical openness, an edgy protean differentiating multiplicity, an agential dis/continuity" (2012, p. 29). Essentially, the only stability offered by queerness lies in its consistent and constant instability—it is not its own category, but an infinite collection of possibilities and ways of being that actively challenge notions of the stability of subjects, objects, and their relationships across time and space. In this way, linearity is also called into question and a stable relationship between cause and effect cannot be assumed. Dance allows me to explore queerness in that it provides an opportunity for movements and actions that

do not make sense in everyday life; improvisational dance has allowed me to experiment with resisting momentum, refusing to hold up my weight, and taking on the weight of other individuals. In this way, dance emphasizes the queerness of physicality and space, and the active, agential roles that weight, space, and relationships play in facilitating dance. I argue that all relationships, including those that are discursively entrenched within mainstream institutions, function through their queerness, their instability across already unstable constructions of temporal and spatial dimensions; as I will further articulate later on, we ultimately construct ourselves, our identities, queerly and non-linearly through projections into unstable pasts and their interactions with the unstable historical and identificatory contexts of our presents.

Fragmented (Dis)identifications

José Esteban Muñoz's (1999) *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* is indispensable in my theorizing about intuition, especially given its focus on investigating identificatory processes performed (literally and figuratively) by queer individuals and communities. Munoz's theory of disidentification draws on (what I read as intuitive) capacities for hoping, knowing, and being beyond heteronormative identity categorizations that masquerade as stable and interminable. Disidentification refers to the process of recycling stereotypes and negative connotations that are linked to personal identifications (such as but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity) in order to create novel, more affirming ways of understanding the self. Disidentification rejects binaries as ideological distinctions and encourages acknowledgment of the "gray areas" of identity. Thus, identity emerges as a fragmentary process, not as an additive collection of stable ontologies. Intuitive knowing is central to this process of self-formation, allowing us to hold onto existing identity categories that resonate with us but require some level of transformation in order to generate new

understandings; these understandings ideally serve us as individuals whose bodies and identities inevitably intersect with one another and with the broader social context. Intuition, I believe, supports the identification of what resonates and what can be transformed but does not necessarily reveal why. I do not believe that intuition provides an explanation of the process of self-formation, but exists as one piece of the complex, fragmentary, and ongoing process of knowing and being oneself.

Again, the process of disidentifying involves identity development that recognizes and reworks, but does not conform to, mainstream modes of representation; this enables individuals to construct their own senses of self that move beyond these representations, beyond the confines of positive and negative connotations and other binary forms of subject categorization. Additionally, there is a tension implicated in the issue of representation because it is never a stable, universally comprehended thing or idea. Representation, what it means and what it does, depends just as much on what *we understand it is and think it does*. Visible signifiers of identity are produced through our perceptions of them at the same time as they produce our perceptions.[13] Extrapolating on the creation of good and bad subjects within mainstream ideology, Muñoz (1999) writes:

> As a practice, disidentification does not dispel those ideological contradictory elements; rather, like a melancholic subject holding on to a lost object, a disidentifying subject works to hold on to this subject and invest it with new life… To disidentify is to read oneself and one's own life narrative in a moment, object, or subject that is not culturally coded to "connect" with the disidentifying subject. It is not to pick and choose what one takes out of an identification. It is not to willfully evacuate the politically dubious or shameful components within an identificatory locus. Rather, it is the reworking of those energies that do not elide the "harmful" or contradictory components of any identity. It is an acceptance of the necessary interjection that has occurred in such situations (p. 9).

[13] I believe that psychoanalytic defense mechanisms are valuable in understanding how perceptions function in conversation with representations and partial perspectives. Projection, for example, functions as a strategy for attributing seemingly unacceptable thoughts and behaviors to others, giving rise to identity-based stereotypes that alter representations, perceptions, and the interplay between them.

Working with and through disidentification blurs the boundaries between good and bad subjecthood, or identifications, displacing the social and discursive control that these boundaries seek to exert. Disidentification involves a recuperation of shame and stigma that, from the perspective of the mainstream, marks some identifications as undesirable and/or impossible; this recuperation prioritizes the possibility of holding multiple, intersecting, and contradictory identities and recognizing that these identities are never—and never were—isolated from one another. Our intuitions know that it is possible to hold a multiplicity of identities all at once and that our gendered, racialized, classed identifications blur into one another, creating a self that is whole but not cohesive. As Muñoz explains, disidentificatory knowing may manifest in feelings of resonance or relatedness with other subjects—this knowing could be understood as seemingly effortless moments of intuitive recognition. However, these moments are laborious in that they demand a continuous "acceptance of the necessary interjection," the transformative work, that is necessary to actually facilitate meaningful recuperations of existing identity categories and creation of imaginative disidentificatory possibilities. This does not mean that intuition is not deeply enmeshed within this process, but that it is not necessarily categorized by ease or effortlessness. Intuitively queer knowing engages knowing without explicit evidence in combination with knowing rooted in embodied histories; this contradiction, in and of itself, expresses the mutability of intuitive and disidentificatory knowing.

Additionally, the labor of disidentification is present in its position as an alternative to identification and counteridentification. Identification and counteridentification, in political senses, are more akin to assimilationist or anti-assimilationist stances respectively. Muñoz (1999) articulates disidentifying as a third option of political self-construction, explaining that disidentifying or "'working on and against' is a strategy that tries to transform a cultural logic

from within" (pp. 11-12). Disidentification, as a theory and strategy, is more concerned with resisting and reworking the social constructions of heteronormativity than it is with disavowing them completely or "using" them. Of course, heteronormative representations are utilized and employed by disidentifying subjects, but disidentification also implies a working *on* these representations, not just with them; disidentification is not limited to the needs and desires of a particular individual, but holds that "cultural logic" is only transformable through collective effort. As a survival strategy for individuals and their communities, disidentification reveals "the fiction of identity"—the notion that identity categories are stable across contexts—and privileges a practice of "*identities-in-difference*"[14] that recognizes that identifications are always overlapping, evolving, and often contradictory (Muñoz, 1999, pp. 5, 6). Feigned assimilation and/or stable identification function as a facet of disidentification as survival strategy; I believe that our intuitions support an awareness of when these moments of feigned assimilation are needed, informing us how to navigate space and time without actually losing the queer potentials that abound within our contradictory identifications.

In this way, I understand disidentification as a generator of a queer self, as a means of embracing fragmentations of normative and novel identifications despite cultural and institutional pressures to shift identification to, or at least closer to, categorizations that fall within the "code of the majority" (Muñoz, 1999, p. 31). Through intuition, we are better able to attend to the fragmentary gist of who we are—and hold on to it—in a way that does not exclude details of context and internal contradiction. Thus, in regard to Muñoz's (1999) elaboration on

[14] Muñoz explains "*identifies-in-difference*" as a term that he draws from radical feminists of color (including Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, Chela Sandoval, and Norma Alarcón). As a formative text in queer of color critique, Muñoz describes that *Disidentifications* situates his thinking within this rich history of theory and knowledge production; he further articulates that his use of terms including "minoritarian subjects" and "people of color/queers of color" is always a reference to "identities-in-difference." This term calls to "a failed interpellation within the dominant public sphere," that is not limited to particular identities, subjects, contexts, or bodies (p. 7). My use of similar terms throughout this thesis is also intended as a call to this description that refers less to a group of subjects and more to the diverse individuals and communities that hold and model "identities-in-difference."

disidentification as a process of reimagining and literally reworking the possibilities of identification, I believe that intuition facilitates this process. Throughout this chapter, I argue that, for queer subjects and other minority groups, intuition provides a vision, a map, of how identification may be experienced as a feeling of multiplicity. Thus, intuition aids disidentification in the deconstruction of cultural identity categories and their resulting gendered, racialized, and classed norms that—as I describe at the end of this chapter—may result in possibilities for future worlds. In Muñoz's words, "Oppositional counterpublics are enabled by visions, 'worldviews,' that reshape as they deconstruct reality" (pp. 196). "Worldviews" guided by intuition thus evolve further as the constructedness of mainstream methods of categorization is further revealed; collective disidentification and intuition by minority subjects generates community-based potentials for resistance in the form of imagined and imaginative queer futures. As intuition and disidentification work in tandem to challenge binary means of lived categorization, norms of identification lose their power in favor of an intuitive embracing of individual and collective multiplicities.

A Digression:

Reading Muñoz's (1999) *Disidentifications* for the first time in my sophomore year, in Professor Gundermann's Feminist & Queer Theory course, was when this project actually began. I was intuitively drawn to *Disidentifications* because reading Muñoz's introduction was an "aha" moment—his ideas clicked for me, especially as I was—and still am—navigating my own queer identity and aspirations for engaging in interdisciplinary study. As a white person, I understand myself as a guest in theoretical traditions like queer of color critique and in dance styles that I have trained in such as House and Waacking; I do not intend to essentialize these traditions and styles as those which are wholly representative of work produced by queers of color. However, I

also recognize that my relationship to these styles is moderated by my whiteness and how that shapes my perspective and engagements. Muñoz's work impressed upon me the importance of learning and practicing how to articulate my identity and how it puts me in relation to queer thinkers and makers of color, despite the fact that this is an imperfect—and constantly ongoing—practice. Additionally, Muñoz's work felt especially valuable to me because it draws on art and performance work in a way that I had not previously experienced in academic writing. As a dancer, I feel that artistic performance is invaluable in understanding our social systems, their discourses on normativity, and imagining strategies of resistance. I feel free when I dance, especially improvisationally, almost as though I am untethered from the social norms that identify and categorize me; dancing and viewing dance helps me to imagine what life untethered could look like for myself and my communities. I deeply love Muñoz's work for the example that it has provided regarding possibilities for integrating queer theory and performance work and, throughout my process of writing and researching, I have been thinking extensively about how love fits and emerges within my academic work. I am writing about that here because (although this is not a primary argument of this thesis) I believe that intuition can be a reflection, even a messenger, of love—the love that we hold for our work, our people, and ourselves. To be more specific, I understand love in this context as investment, tenderness, and protectiveness. I love *Disidentifications* because I am invested in Muñoz's theorizations and invested in what they can do for queer subjects like myself. Prioritizing love as a guide throughout this process feels like a radical means of loving myself within and through my academic work and thus conveying this love to my collaborators. Dancing through improvisation brought forth the love that I have for dance as a practice, particularly one that engages my queerness in surprising, often inarticulable ways. Journaling throughout my writing, researching, and making has allowed me

to express love in the moment and to have it recorded—in the form of a fragment of the process—for safekeeping. Love emerged in every rehearsal with my cast of dancers because they deserved to have the safest, richest, and most generous space that I could give them. Whether dancer, scientist, writer, or researcher, our love is carried by our intuitions, by the directions in which we are drawn, by the connections we discover, and by the texts in which we are invested—personal and academic blur into one another because our academic aspirations and interests cannot help but be molded by our personal preferences and investments. Writing with and through intuition allows us to put more love out, to experiment with what it feels like to value love as part of dreaming, world-making, and imagining queer futures. In many ways, this feels like naïve, reckless optimism especially given that Western academic spaces set little store by love and even openly reject, destroy, and shame it. So, I choose to dwell on my love for Muñoz's work and for dance here because it feels like an alternative, a novel possibility for how I—and we—go about working, writing, and allowing ourselves to show up as loving, invested subjects.

Pre-out Consciousness

Like intuition, disidentification offers methods of understanding and defining identity that can be creatively explored, but not necessarily represented, in language. Rationalism in the academy privileges language as representative of static and knowable objects—objects are contained within the language used to describe them, facilitating Scientific replicability and generalizability. In the same way, language is tethered to constructions of objective reality as the "proper" medium for communication. I argue that the bias regarding language as only representational is inadequate because, contrary to the view that language is a one-to-one mapping of reality, language is a more creative, mutable, context-dependent form of

communication; subjective reality cannot be trapped within the confines of language, and language can also do more than simply represent realities. In the context of self-identification, language that accompanies normative discursive and ideological identity categories are not always enough, especially for queer subjects who hold intersecting identities that are not discursively allowed to coexist. We do not have the language to fully express potentials that exist entirely, or at least partially, outside of normative categorizations, and I would argue that we do not need to. Other creative forms of expression—like dance, of course—offer alternative languages that build self-understanding and collective knowing; these are partial themselves, but generate possibilities that may complement and/or contradict those contained in written word. There is an indescribability involved in the knowing, feeling, and sensing that accompanies identifying a person or an aesthetic that resonates deeply with one's sense of self and their own expression of identity. At the same time, language—in diverse forms—can support us in generating and envisioning creative potentials for (dis)identification, performing realities that do not currently exist, and exploring the contradiction between what language can and cannot do.

Through written language, Muñoz (1999) discusses how the indescribable knowing involved in disidentification may support the production of a better sense of one's own identity. In his introduction to *Disidentifications*, Muñoz describes a memory of watching a television program featuring Truman Capote; despite the confusion, even terror, that this viewing stirred in Muñoz's "pre-out consciousness," he recalls "feeling a deep pleasure in hearing Capote make language, in 'getting' the fantastic bitchiness of his quip" (p. 4)[15]. Writing as a means of processing this memory—which we later learn is a false memory that could not have actually played out in the way that Muñoz described—conveys the instability and interpretative potentials

[15] I argue that "pre-out consciousness" can be understood as unconscious intuition as a facilitator of almost or near knowing. The indescribability of this space makes it recognizable on the unconscious, intuitive level but not for the conscious mind.

offered within and through language. I appreciate Muñoz's use of "getting" here, for this ambiguously illustrates the presence of an intuitive feeling in an event that ultimately facilitated Muñoz's own disidentification with Capote. It is that initial, almost instantaneous intuition that made it clear to Muñoz that there was something there, in Capote's way of speaking, that he could recognize despite the fact that this recognition was accompanied by fear regarding his not-yet-declared queer identity; even though he knew that there was something there, he did not yet know what that something could be.

"Pre-out consciousness" is also interesting in that it contains the concept of "outness" which is an ambiguous term in and of itself. Being "out" (as gay in this case) implies some awareness, or acceptance, or declaration of one's identity that marks one as a bad subject within the mainstream—one is a bad subject in that they are opposing the expectations of heteronormativity. However, one is not necessarily challenging the binary that exists between good (heteronormative) subjecthood and bad (anti-assimilationist) subjecthood by merely occupying a space of outness. Prioritizing anti-assimilation and counteridentification may function as a legitimate strategy of opposition, but as Muñoz (1999) argues, it also reifies distinct categories of identification that are legible within a heteronormative system. Expanding or disidentifying with notions of outness—what it may be and how it may appear—offers a move beyond the nameable, categorizable, and declarative identity categories offered by and within mainstream cultural spheres. Outness can be ephemeral, unconscious, and barely there, and yet still function as an affirming practice for a minoritarian subject that need not explicitly draw on literal declarations of identity to others. Outness may not be explicit in some spaces and surroundings, and more salient in spaces of safe, affirming community. Intuition emerges as a facilitator of outness, as hints of recognition and resonance between and within subjects; this

further facilitates the creation of community that is not dependent on transparent language of identification. For Muñoz, outness manifested in initial discomfort at "getting" Capote's own queer sensibilities that hinted at his own. This is not to say that Muñoz mapped his own development as a queer subject onto the representation of queerness offered by Capote; instead, Muñoz disidentified with Capote, using his televised performance in the process of fashioning his own sense of self. Pre-out consciousness, I believe, refers to this space of intuitive feeling (Muñoz's viewing and "getting" of Capote) that may facilitate later reflection on how one ended up at a present moment of self-formation (which I refer to as post-out consciousness in the following section).

Post-out Consciousness

The identification of a pre-out consciousness implies the existence of a post-out consciousness, but if outness itself is fluid and fragmentary then there need not be a firm division between these projects of self-making. Pre- and post-out consciousness are continuous, intertwined aspects of becoming and understanding oneself—a process that lacks a clear beginning or end given that it is ongoing. Muñoz's (1999) further discussion of his memory of watching Capote on television reveals how intuition alogically, nonsensically facilitates his disidentificatory process and demonstrates the interplay between pre- and post-out consciousness. Capote had appeared on an episode of the *David Susskind Show*, and Muñoz's memory was that he had watched the episode when it was first broadcasted. Further research revealed that the episode had aired before Muñoz's birth, and his exposure to the episode must have been from a later rerun or from reading about Capote's appearance. Although the "truth" of Muñoz's memory may be unlocatable, Muñoz emphasizes that "my memory and subjectivity reformatted that memory, letting it work within my own internal narratives of subject formation"

(p. 4). The way I read Muñoz's remembering is as an example of intuition bringing feelings and moments to the surface, of reconfiguring a remembered series of events in such a way as to make them easily accessible and relevant to Muñoz's present, post-out self. Intuition did not so much create a false narrative in this case, as an alogical one—one that did not quite hold up to fact-checking and notions of linearity. Muñoz's retelling of his reconstructed memory is a conscious interpretation (a representation of post-out consciousness) of a bodily, affective response that originated from a more unconscious place of knowing (a manifestation of pre-out consciousness).

I believe that pre- and post-out consciousness take shape from a mingling of intersubjectivity and the intrapsychic—terms that I pull from Jessica Benjamin's (1990) theorizing in "An Outline of Intersubjectivity: The Development of Recognition." Benjamin writes primarily on psychoanalytic theory in conversation with feminist principles and object relations, and her theorizing is compatible with Muñoz's (1999) regarding disidentifications as a self-making practice that blurs the boundaries between identity and desire. Benjamin's conception of intersubjectivity centers the possibility for understanding others in relation, generating an "interplay between two different subjective worlds" (p. 33-34). She discusses the recognition of self vs. other as vulnerable to a slippage into self (subject) vs. object, where the object lacks agency in relation to the subject; intersubjectivity discursively challenges the subject-object binary posited by Cartesian dualism by emphasizing the agency of the other and this agency in relation to that of the self. In other words, intersubjectivity feeds off of collectivity and the ability of collective knowledge formations to generate shared, usable strategies for identification—intersubjective relationships emerge from shared "getting." In contrast, the intrapsychic refers to the more internal, individual process of making sense of, or "using," the

other; in this case, the other is understood to be less of an active agent in one's own sense of self and more of a marker of difference. From significations of difference, a subject may internally transform what they glean from those significations. Regarding intersubjectivity as recognition of the agency of the other and its interactions with the intrapsychic as a means of destroying the other, Benjamin explains:

> But even when the capacity for recognition is well developed, when the subject can use shared reality and receive the nourishment of 'other-than-me substance,' the intrapsychic capacities remain. The mind's ability to manipulate, to displace, to reverse, to turn one thing into another is not a mere negation of reality, but the source of mental creativity… Thus 'using' the other properly remains in counterpoint to 'relating through identifications.' Using, that is recognizing, implies the capacity to transcend complementary structures, but not the absence of them… It means a balance of destruction with recognition (p. 43-44).

Essentially, the intrapsychic and intersubjective function through a push-and-pull relationship that simultaneously draws on the potential for mutual recognition and obliterates the agency of the other. Applying this definition of intersubjectivity to Muñoz's disidentificatory memory of Capote's quip, I argue that intersubjectivity emerges between Muñoz's adult (present, post-out) self and his child (past, pre-out) self. This relationship elucidates the co-constitutive processes of self-making that connect his past and present. In other worlds, adult Muñoz constructs—the remembered—child Muñoz through reflection and imagination. At the same time, the child Muñoz that is remembered by adult Muñoz structures how he is able to use this memory to understand who he is in the present; his memories of child Muñoz make certain possibilities for how he came to be possible, especially as they exist in conversation with what adult Muñoz wanted to understand through his childhood self. Simultaneously, the intrapsychic supported Muñoz's generation of the memory in the first place; the memory ultimately served as a source of clarification for the (ongoing) project of his self-formation, essentially appropriating ("using") his past self to produce a creative, intuitive potential of what might have been. The falseness of

the memory further elucidates the mind's ability to "turn one thing into another," to know that what was once experienced as fear was *actually* queer knowing.

The notion of belatedness—a concept theorized by Sigmund Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and Cathy Caruth in *Unexplained Experience* and further expanded upon by Andrew Barnaby (2012) in "Coming Too Late: Freud, Belatedness, and Existential Trauma"—is relevant to constructions of self across time that blur the perceived linearity of when an event was actually experienced and processed by a subject. Barnaby extrapolates on the differences between Freud's and Caruth's theories regarding experiences of trauma as either or simultaneously too early and too late. For Freud, deferred action (*Nachträglichkeit*), also termed afterwardsness or belatedness, refers to trauma that is experienced too soon to be understood by and integrated into the consciousness of the subject; this leads to dissociation at the time of the trauma and repression of the subsequent memory. The belatedness of a traumatic event, in this case, refers to the retroactive investing of meaning within the memory of that event, given that the subject was initially unable to recognize a full meaning at the time of experience. Caruth, on the other hand, understands belatedness as awareness or meaning of a trauma emerging paradoxically too late and too early in that, during the actual experience of the trauma, the subject is psychologically missing from the experience. This does not refer to dissociation and repression, but an immediate latency of the meaning of the event itself. Barnaby demonstrates his additions to Caruth's ideas by posing the question, "But what if the initial encounter is not a presence dislocated in the mind but precisely a true originary absence, an experience in relation to which the traumatized subject was never and could never have been 'there?' (pp. 123-124). Barnaby pushes Caruth's notion of missing further into absence, or the notion that the event can

only later be infused with meaning because the subject was absent in the first place, constituting us as subjects without our awareness of this constitution.[16]

Understanding Muñoz's (1999) viewing of Capote through Barnaby's (20212) construction of belatedness as an absence of the subject puts forth the notion that child Muñoz was not consciously present for this viewing, implying a "temporal lag in the registering of [the] event" (Barnaby, 2012, p. 124). This notion does not immediately align with my belief in the relationship between the intersubjective and intrapsychic as constituting a temporal crossing that connects child and adult Muñoz. However, absence of the subject also suggests, even emphasizes, the role of interpretation in its constitution because absence need not imply a loss of constitutive agency. Benjamin (1990) describes reality as a construction of "mental creativity" that is made through "The mind's ability to manipulate, to displace, to reverse, to turn one thing into another" (pp. 43-44). The role of the mind in molding reality, in interpreting and reinterpreting it, therefore uses absence as the fuel for interpretation; although Muñoz's pre-out consciousness could not take in nor interpet his viewing of Capote beyond a sense of intuitive "getting," his pre-out consciousness required this absence for the memory to hold later meaning. Adult Muñoz, as an "out" subject, interprets his response to Capote as a "getting" that enables him to read his own queerness within this experience. Barnaby's belatedness as absence, here, underscores interpretation as the destabilizer of static understandings of absence and identity construction. In other words, child Muñoz, despite his unawareness of the meaning of his

[16] I utilize Barnaby's explorations of Freud and Caruth's theories of belatedness (rather than drawing from their works directly) because triangulations and understanding through interpretation is central to this work. At the end of this chapter, I discuss the triangulation that emerges between myself, Muñoz, and comedian Marga Gomez and shapes my aesthetic invocation of Gomez's performance in my dance capstone. In this chapter, the triangulation between Barnaby, Caruth, and Freud demonstrates intersubjectivity as a crossing of time and space. Although Barnaby's expansion upon the theories of Freud and Caruth could be easily comprehended as an example of linear progress in a theoretical project, I believe that Barnaby's thinking illustrates his own constitution as a subject through Freud and through Caruth's interpretation of Freud; thus, this relationship can be better understood as an intermingling of perspectives that were generated under specific temporal conditions but are nevertheless constituted through their collective instability and non-linearity.

"getting," was still constituted through it; his self-formation is not something that came about through a purely retroactive understanding. His later awareness, although a more salient aspect of his queer self-formation, is not more useful nor important in this process than the initial absence. Instead, absence in the past infuses awareness in the present with more interpretive potentials, making constitution across time inevitable.

Unstable Ontologies: Inside Jokes with Diesel Dykes

In *Disidentifications*, Muñoz's (1999) invocation of Marga Gomez's presence in Muñoz's introduction was what first pulled me into his writing; Gomez's (1996) sketch, *Marga Gomez is Pretty Witty & Gay* (*MGisPW&G*)[17] is central to Muñoz's theoretical productions, for they generated the interpretive potential that was required for Muñoz to read his memory of Capote as disidentificatory. Regarding his recollection of Capote's "fantastic bitchiness," Muñoz describes that *MGisPW&G*, "helped and even instructed this reremembering, enabling me to somehow understand the power and shame of queerness" (pp. 4-5). Muñoz's choice to invoke Gomez in this way discloses the presence of intuition in the construction of *Disidentification*s as a text. Gomez's dramatization of a formative memory in her process of queer becoming stirs Muñoz's own memory bank, intuitively accessing one that holds a similar event of queer knowing; I will describe my own similar experience in the next chapter. It is telling that Muñoz uses "somehow" to express the ambiguity of his knowing, knowing that is intuitive and therefore not quite articulable or traceable. In this way, Gomez's work functions as an intellectual "in" for Muñoz's analysis of his own illusory memories and intuitively queer knowing. I believe that this is an example of how our intuitions can lay invaluable groundwork for further exploration and theorization through pulling us in particular directions, and in Muñoz's case, towards particular memories.

[17] See the introduction for a summary of *MGisPW&G*.

In line with Muñoz's (1999) theory of disidentifications, it would be an oversimplification to state that the remembered viewing of Capote was the cause of the realization of his queerness (the effect). Instead, his reformatting of and reflection on this memory is queer itself in its non-linearity, in the way it complicates the relationship between identity construction and time given that Muñoz realized that it was impossible for him to have viewed the initial airing of this episode. Similarly, disidentification is a specifically queer strategy in that it does not signify a one-to-one mapping of categorical identity from one subject to another. Muñoz was drawn to Capote's "bitchiness," the implicit challenge of normative masculinity that Capote presented through his language, gestures, and presentation (p. 4). Intuitively queer knowing emerges here as a relationship between intuition and queerness in which the boundaries between them are blurred; intuition is queer in the sense that it is not a stable, predictable process of knowing and emerges for Muñoz, a queer subject, as a means of realizing and developing an ongoing process of self-formation. Identity formation, for both Muñoz and Gomez in their reformulations and dramatizations of memory, implies a constant returning to the past and projecting into the future which, together, constitute this process as always unstable, in progress, and partially belated.

Like Muñoz, Gomez (1996) demonstrates an intuitively queer process of knowing in *MGisPW&G* in which she shares her own reformatted memory of pre-out consciousness. When Gomez's "homosexual hearing" kicks in and calls her out of bed to join her mother watching the *David Susskind Show*, she is drawn in by the "mysterious erotic" of the lesbians featured on the program. She does not view them as abject—as they are typically depicted by mainstream media—but as sources of glamor and desire (p. 3). Muñoz (1999) describes that this reconfiguration of mainstream lesbian representations exemplifies disidentification as a survival

strategy for Gomez, for her "disidentification with these damaged stereotypes recycled them as powerful and seductive sites of self-creation" (p. 4). In other words, Gomez's experience of intuition generates a relationship between her burgeoning pre-out consciousness and the possibilities for being in the world that are intimated by the lesbians. However, she also does not map her own sexuality directly onto that presented by the lesbians; instead, her identification with them is realized through a desire to embody a similar—but not necessarily an equivalent—sapphic glamor. This informs a non-linear interplay between child and adult Gomez, through which both are constituted; their cross-temporal intersubjectivity produces Gomez's evolving sense of identity, therefore allowing her to reflect on and continuously re-remember this early, queer experience of knowing. Her remembering is infused with greater meaning through its sense of belatedness—of not being realized in time for Gomez to be psychologically present during the actual event—but transformed through the interpretive powers of her intrapsychic. Thus, sapphic glamor works not as a static, attainable category for Gomez, but as an unstable aspiration that is produced and reproduced across time.

Throughout *MGisPW&G*, Gomez (1996) conveys intuitively queer knowing as a vital aspect of her queer self-formation especially given her focus on ambiguous appearances and concealed identifications throughout the sketch. The "veil of secrecy" under which the lesbians operate functions as a dramatization of knowing that is ambiguous and difficult—if not impossible—to articulate, but nevertheless formative in the process of self-formation (p. 196). The lesbians offer both a representation of queerness and interpretive potential that Gomez utilizes in her disidentification with this representation. Despite their "veil of secrecy," extravagant disguises (wigs and all), and usage of "synonyms" instead of their real names, the lesbians are not strangers to Gomez (p. 196). Their slippages of language, such as using

"synonyms" instead of "pseudonyms," emphasizes how familiarity may function through disjuncture and fragmentation; this particular catachresis illustrates how disidentification functions as a realization of the "me and not me" (Muñoz, 1999, p. 3). Just in the same way that a synonym is not quite a pseudonym, the lesbians masquerade as not quite themselves through disguise, and Gomez is not quite one of them. The likeness between herself and the lesbians is further complicated through the powers of Gomez's "homosexual hearing," which yields an interpellating call that is detectable only to her. Literally calling to her, one of the lesbians "flicks her tongue" and says, "Marga Gomez, welcome to the club Cara Mia" (Gomez, 1996, p. 296). *Cara mía* translates to "my dear" in Italian, but "my face" in Spanish—Gomez is from a Spanish-speaking family and therefore interprets this call as "*my face*." This calling makes it undeniable to child Gomez that she is like the lesbians on television and they are like her, also begging the question of who is who in the first place. In this way, the distinction between Gomez's self and that of the calling lesbian is made ambiguous; they are not isolated subjects, but subjects in an intersubjective relationship through which they are each constituted.

Gomez's (1996) (mis)understanding of *cara mía* shapes how she disidentifies with this lesbian representation and simultaneously calls to another queer tradition that possesses its own aesthetic archive; this further demonstrates the instability of language communication, challenging the notion that any ontologies exist as stable. Within Cartesian philosophy, phenomena possess stable truths that can be uncovered or revealed by an objective, detached subject, leaving no room for the ambiguity of partial truths produced by misunderstanding. I believe that, through a prioritization of ambiguous, intuitive, and disidentificatory knowing, we can understand how misunderstanding does, in fact, come to matter. I argue in favor of affirming the notion that we are produced through misunderstanding and the interpretive potential that it

offers and in favor of avoiding understandings of static ontologies as self-evident truths that undergird our social relations. The potential for hearing *cara mía* as Italian—"my dear"—as well as the importance of the wigs in the lesbians' disguises—Gomez quips that "It was the wigs that made me want to be one"—points to gay male representation and aesthetics. Wigs call to the hyper-feminine glamor of the drag queen and the extravagant "outness" that they perform. Both wigs and Italian call to opera—which was especially popular with gay men at this time—and the melodramatic glamor that it offers, especially the opera singers who are also queens in their own right.[18] The glamor of drag and of the opera bleed into one another to produce an aesthetic of queenliness, of outness, that certainly contrasts with the concealment and depression of the lesbians. Thus, Gomez represents a seemingly binary contrast between gay male and lesbian sensibilities, or approaches to their social presentation as "out" subjects. These sensibilities also bleed into one another to produce the particular possibility of sapphic glamor that Gomez reads in her viewing of the lesbians; gay male and lesbian aesthetics thus emerge not as a binary but as a necessary site of gender crossing. Crossing, here, also does not imply a disavowal of one in favor of the other but a mutability of categorizations that ultimately influence one another and are constituted in relation to one another. In this way, Gomez refers to and yearns for "*THE LIFE"* as a place of such stigmatized instability, one that is deemed to be deeply undesirable and even impossible by mainstream demands for ontologies to remain in stasis.

Comedy as Queer Knowing

Looking to the particular mode of communication through which Gomez tells her story of intuitively queer knowing, comedy emerges as a powerful conveyor of such knowing. I believe

[18] In *The Queen's Throat: Opera, Homosexuality, and the Mystery of Desire*, Wayne Koestenbaum (1993) writes on the gay male love for opera and identification with opera singers; "opera queens," or gay male opera lovers, find opera singers as representations of glamor and extravagance (p. 9). As Koestenbaum explains, the flashy visibility of the opera singer and the sheer undeniability of their voice, provides a surrogate for gay men to experience such visibility, or "outness."

that comedy can be an especially effective and creative way of communicating, sharing ideas, and imagining how things could be, should be different; dance, similarly, can be deeply comical and generate specific responses through being so. In *Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters*, Ted Cohen (1999) describes jokes or comedy as a "currency of intimacy" (p. xi). He understands comedy as a facilitator of community, of shared (yet also always partial) knowing, stating that:

> When the community is focused on a joke, the intimacy has two constituents. The first constituent is a shared set of beliefs, dispositions, prejudices, preferences, et cetera–a shared outlook on the world, or at least part of an outlook. The second constituent is a shared feeling–a shared response to something. The first constituent can be cultivated and realized without jokes. So can the second constituent, but with jokes, the second constituent is amplified by the first (p. 28).

Thus, joking functions as a means of building and being in community; it brings individuals together under shared beliefs or feelings and unites them in the experience of response. I believe that it is this shared response that makes comedy especially useful in understanding how intuitively queer knowing comes about as an unstable and interpretive knowledge, for a shared response does not imply identical responses across individuals. Here, I believe that Benjamin's (1990) conception of the intrapsychic is relevant in the process of finding personal resonance with a joke or comedic act. The intrapsychic enables a creative reworking and using of—perhaps a disidentification with—the components of a joke, allowing it to work for and with the particulars of one's own experiences and identities. For example, Gomez's (1996) work in *MGisPW&G* feels relevant to my life because of the draw that I feel to queer aesthetics of smokiness, mystery, and glamor. Like Gomez, I feel the lure of phobic representations of queer people and have refashioned these representations to find affirmation for my own ever-evolving sense of identity as a queer person. These aesthetics also feel reminiscent of the 1980s underground Ball scene, in which queer individuals found inventive ways of moving and being

in community, often invoking mystery as both survival strategy and powerful aesthetic. In this setting, campy humor was a vehicle for imagining new, queer, and alternative ways of being in the world that those offered by the mainstream.

Cohen's thoughts on how jokes generate experiences of shared response is deepened by Cris Mayo's (2014) work in *Humorous Relations: Attentiveness, pleasure and risk*. Moving beyond the notion that humor merely creates intimacy across individuals in the same space, Mayo describes humor as a means of acknowledging and sharing multiple meanings, therefore drawing on individuals' experiences of knowing through their collectivity. They describe that, in the context of classroom learning, "Humor, too, is a form of doubled-talk that can simultaneously address different audiences differently and draw attention to the fact of those multiple addresses and requires particular forms of listening—listening for the expected and unexpected together" (p. 179). This idea certainly applies to work shared in performance art settings and comedy venues in which audiences may respond to certain components of a joke, but perhaps not others. Some individuals may pick up on the "doubled-talk" of a joke in the same way that Gomez picked up on the interpellating call of the lesbian, despite her mother's ignorance of this call. For Gomez, this hidden meaning was legible because of the intuitive draw that she felt to the lesbians as a result of her own burgeoning queer identity and homosexual hearing; for her, there was *more* offered in that television program than may be experienced by heterosexual viewers.

Essentially, seeing or hearing more than just a surface level meaning involves an intuitive sense of knowing that there is more to see or hear. Mayo (2014) further elaborates on multiple meanings in jokes, explaining that:

> Any interpretive act that moves against the first meaning we might make of something reminds us of our place in a world of multiple meanings and diverse interpreters… When we understand a puzzling joke or a quick play on words, we know that we know more than we thought we knew. The short-circuit of such humor means we do not have to go

> through the cumbersome process of explaining all that we needed to know in order to laugh together in the acknowledgement of multiple meanings at play (p. 171).

Thus, the production of responses to and interpretations of jokes that are not necessarily appropriate or obvious to certain viewers emerge from the intuitive knowing and interpretation of other viewers. An inside joke is created by and between those who just "get it," without having to put in too much effort. For Muñoz (1999) and Gomez (1996), inside jokes were formulated through the interactions between their experiences of pre- and post-out consciousness and representations of undeniably queer figures. Their intuitions allowed them to see the "unexpected" in their viewings of Capote and the "lady homosexuals" or, in other words, the under-the-surface possibilities that these representations offered (Gomez, 1996, p. 196). Instead of viewing these representations as wholly abject, Muñoz and Gomez were able to access visions of queerness as powerful, desirable, and intriguing; paradoxically, an understanding that these figures carry stigma in the mainstream made them all the more intriguing. Filtered through the perspective of their post-out consciousnesses, both Muñoz and Gomez were able to experience these moments as intuitive, disidentificatory knowing and thus recount them humorously for an audience.

In her solo performance, *jaywalker*, Gomez models another moment of intuitive and disidentificatory self construction through a hyperbolic exploration of her intersecting identities. Gretchen Sauer's (2002) article, "You're Watching Me: Marga Gomez's Queer Self-Representation," on Gomez's *jaywalker* discusses the challenge of holding lesbian and Latina identification at the same time—in fact, Gomez jokingly suggests that this is actually impossible in the sketch. According to Sauer, Gomez introduces herself in *jaywalker* as half of each— "half latina, half lesbian" (p. 55). Gomez plays with and transforms normative descriptions of ethnic and racial identity as half-and-half (like if one identifies as half latina and

half white, or "mixed") through subverting expectations regarding the discursive division between sexual orientation and ethnicity. Racial identities are "allowed" to be articulated in this way because they belong to the same identity category—they "match." Thus, Gomez introduces herself in a way that does not match up with mainstream identity categories, making her declaration of identity ridiculous in its humorousness and making the categories themselves appear ridiculous. Through performatively dividing herself in two based upon her ethnic and sexual identities, Gomez generates a caricature of the stereotypes ascribed to the particular communities of which she is a member, such as that regarding Latinx communities as homophobic and queer communities as racist. By expressing these two identities as having absolutely nothing to do with one another, Gomez performatively sidesteps the racism and homophobia that will supposedly befall her if she attempts to identify herself as a lesbian and a Latina simultaneously. Essentially, she disidentifies with the mainstream notion that these identities are mutually exclusive and/or cannot be discussed in relation to one another; this hyperbole expresses the great extent to which these sites do inform one another and merge in order to create Gomez's particular sense and experience of self.

Intuition emerges here, I believe, because Gomez knows, holds, and expresses that she is always both a lesbian and a Latina—her identity is a conglomeration of both. Although this is perhaps an obvious claim, I feel that it is important to emphasize the obviousness here in order to reveal the omnipotence of discursive structures that distinguish between identity categories (such as, but not limited to sexual orientation and ethnicity) in order to divide communities. In Sauer's (2002) words, Gomez's performance "is a political reaction against queer invisibility, constantly affirming her identity by repeatedly confessing it in performance, making it undeniable" (p. 55). I would add to this statement that Gomez also resists the invisibility of intersecting

identifications and affirms identifications that transcend identity categories, affirming her lived experience as a Latina lesbian/lesbian Latina. Her comedy, therefore, provides a counterpoint to the self-evident truths within the academy, especially regarding the division objective and subjective, categorization and fluidity, or order and chaos. Despite this affirmation that identity is always intersecting, Gomez's identities as a lesbian and a Latina are not necessarily equated to be the same; caricaturization does not necessarily deny the fact that holding and being labeled in particular ways does produce concrete, lived realities. For example, Gomez's quips in *jaywalker* point to the reality that some spaces and communities may accept her Latina identity but not her identity as a lesbian, and vice versa. Her comedy reflects this tangible tension and in doing so, I believe, functions as a means of both resistance and reification of identity categories; Gomez is caught in a double bind produced by her caricatures of identity categories that remain in tension and her resistance to identities in isolation. Thus, Gomez's comedy emerges as neither a disavowal nor an acceptance of mainstream categorization, but a privileging of queer, contradictory ways of being in the world that further emphasizes the power of comedy in conveying multiple meanings and resisting stable ontologies. Dance, as a practice and a mode of performance, has a similar power to convey multiplicities, contradiction, and the (un)expected. I will describe my dance capstone piece, "returning, again," in the following chapter as a performance in which I read multiple strategies for interpretive potential.

Patron Saints

Turning lastly, and again, to the central figure of Marga Gomez as a queer comedian and performer, I understand Gomez as the creative muse for "returning, again" and for this thesis; beyond providing invaluable examples of performance work as sites of intuitively queer knowing, the smoky, glamorous world that Gomez (1996) creates in *MGisPW&G* informed the

aesthetics, the relationships, and the mood that developed throughout the creation and production of "returning, again."[19] I appreciate the term "patron saint" that Monica Huerta (2021) utilizes in *Magical Habits* to refer to a figure of influence and inspiration for her book and scholarly work (p. xi). Huarez designates a statue of Benito Juárez, the first indigenous president of Mexico—who served from 1858 until 1872—located in Chicago as her patron saint. The term "patron saint" is complex—it does not imply a static divide between Huerta and "Juárez the Statue" in which Juárez is understood as an inagential object, but a give-and-take of energy that occurs between them and constitutes them both as subjects (p. xi).[20] Juárez the Man's position as the first indigenous president of Mexico is not lost on Huerta (2021)—in combination with her own experiences as a Mexican—but "ethnically ambiguous looking to some"—scholar, Huerta reads Juárez the Statue as eternally holding, and extending, existential questions regarding land, location, and property (p. xvi). She generates a relationship between herself and Juárez the Statue, using his presence and symbolism as a strategy for understanding her own relationship to land that was claimed by colonial powers.

In the preface to *Magical Habits*, Huerta (2021) describes the moment of her first meeting with Juárez the Statue: "Genuinely interested in an answer, I asked him, What are you

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[19] I choose to explore this idea and my creative and theoretical invocations of Gomez in "returning, again" here because it provides valuable context regarding how I understand queer subject-formation and comedy; I believe that providing this context prior to discussing "returning, again" more explicitly in the third chapter is valuable insofar as it allows the third chapter to center dance as its own particular medium for communicating queerness, comedy, and glamor. I will further discuss how my notion of queer glamor emerged throughout "returning, again" from Gomez and in conversation with other queer creators in that chapter.

[20] Huerta (2021) further articulates the complexity of "Juárez the Man," in relation to "Juárez the Statue," and its location in the city of Chicago in *Magical Habits* (p. xi). Juárez the Man had served during the period of 1846-48, during which the United States took over much land in and around Mexico City and extended the coercive option of American citizenship to Mexican communities. Juárez's indigeneity was contradictory to his position as the president of Mexico and the respect that he had garnered from the US's federal government at the time, and as Huerta describes, "One paradox of Juárez's presidency was that he oversaw a massive eradication of collective indigenous rights, even as he was Zapotec" (p. xii). Juárez the Statue includes a plaque on which he is deemed a "Great President of Mexico" and a "Hero of the Americas," both of which hold their own internal contradictions given the statue's placement in the US (p. xii). Juárez the Man's indigeneity is at odds with how he is portrayed in the statue, as an American hero in the style that immortalizes figures of US colonial sovereignty.

doing here? And with both seriousness and a sense of play, he shot back, What are *you* doing here?" (p. xi). Huerta's question is one of curiosity because, as she explains, "I was surprised to find him there, in part because I hadn't been looking for him" (p. xi). Juárez the Statue's question was legible to Huerta as a call to reflect on her own here-ness, in the United States, as an academic of color with ties to Mexican restaurants throughout Chicago—sites of her cultural and racial heritage. Juárez the Statue, I believe, is an intellectual, intuitively queer "in" to her scholarship in a similar way that Gomez functioned for Muñoz (1999) in *Disidentifications*. Huerta's intuition makes Juárez the Statue legible to her in particular, meaningful ways, allowing her to see the contradictions of a colonial past, its present reverberations, and visions of a "future that hasn't yet arrived" in his presence (p. xiii). Much in the same way, Gomez (1996) in *MGisPW&G* forced me to question my own here-ness within queer culture, histories, and representations. As I will describe in the following chapter, her formative memory of the lesbians on television, what they offered to her in terms of glamor and abjection, helped me to uncover my own formative memory of queer becoming, one that called upon my own intuitively queer knowing and my ability to hear and see *more*.

Although Huerta (2021) does not describe her navigation of contradiction through and with Juárez the Statue as a disidentification explicitly, her approach to finding inspiration within sites of contradiction and embracing their multiplicities—not picking and choosing what to embrace and what to discard—influenced an exploration of what I now understand to be my own disidentification with Gomez. Gomez, for me, is a figure with whom I am unable to identify neatly. Like Gomez, queerness is deeply integrated into how I understand and present myself, but my queerness is also always related to my whiteness. As Gomez demonstrates through the catechesis in *jaywalker*—written on by Gretchen Sauer (2002)—that concerns her sexual

orientation and ethnic identity, she is a Latina lesbian/lesbian Latina; these identities are inextricably linked, always shaping how she presents herself to the world and to her Latine and queer communities. I recognize my racial privilege as I theorize with and about Gomez's work and that of other queer individuals of color, and how this privilege has offered me lived experiences that differ significantly and tangibly from those that Gomez explores in her comedy. I disidentify with Gomez in that I cannot pretend that I am able to understand her experiences as a Latina; the partiality of my perspective makes "getting" her jokes about being a Latina—and therefore a Latina lesbian—impossible on an embodied level. Disidentification, in this case, functions as a way for me to move towards a more full awareness of this partiality and how it is shaped by white solipsism in the mainstream. This further emphasizes the notion that intuitively queer knowing cannot be understood as an isolation of one's queerness as an essential, solitary element of their identity; this understanding would make my notion of intuitively queer knowing incompatible with Muñoz's theory of disidentifications. Instead, the intuitively queer knowing that initiated my personal and academic interest in Gomez's work must be integrated alongside an intersectional approach to identity formation—an approach that holds that my queerness is never isolated from my whiteness and Gomez's Latina identity can never be separated from her identity as a lesbian.

Another vital aspect of how I interpret Gomez (1996)—particularly the Gomez who wrote and performed *MGisPW&G*—is as a figure interpreted through the ideas and words of Muñoz (1999); the Gomez that existed and exists for me in the pages of *Disidentifications* drives how I understand disidentification and intuition as forms of knowing that make embodiment undeniable and instability central to identity formation. Thus, there is a triangulation between myself, Gomez, and Muñoz, much like that which emerges between Gomez the comedian, child

Gomez, and the lesbians on television and between Huerta, Juárez the Man, and Juárez the Statue. The idea of triangulation has been heavily theorized by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1985) in *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Triangulation, for Sedgwick, primarily refers to the way through which relations between two men are formulated in conversation with their respective relationships with a woman, but can also function as a flexible schema for understanding relationships between other subjects. My invocation of Gomez was formed and functions through my engagement with Muñoz's *Disidentifications*; there is not a one-to-one connection between myself and Gomez, and my interpretation of her work is always also filtered through Muñoz's interpretations.[21] Thus, although I still understand Gomez within the world of *MGisPW&G* as the patron saint of this thesis and the choreographic process for and performances of "returning, again," Muñoz haunts the connection that I garner between Gomez's work and my own queer sensibilities.

[21] Triangulations are also deeply embedded within psychoanalytic and Lacanian conceptualizations of identity construction. As explored in John Forrester's (1991) translation of Lacan's *Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953-1954*, Lacan's symbolic order, for example, refers to the triangulation that exists between the self, the mainstream dictates that control interactions with culture and language, and the other, or alternative to these dictates. The imaginary order refers to one's perception that they are in a direct (non-triangular) relationship with an object of desire; I could imagine that I am in a direct relationship with Gomez's work through actually viewing her work (although viewing a recording would open other potentials for reading triangulation and mediation of our relationship). Muñoz's undeniable influence within this relationship—how and to what extent I am able to interact with Gomez's work—can also be understood as redolent of Lacan's notion of the symbolic order, as the symbolic father who shapes my engagement with and comprehension of Gomez's work.

CHAPTER THREE: Queer Dance, Intuitive Making

Dance has been a constant practice for me since I was two and I am constantly being and becoming through dance; I am constituted as a subject through my dance practice at the same time as I constitute it. In the same way, possibilities for embodiment through dance are constituted through dance as an embodied practice, one that reveals the embodied nature of all forms of doing and knowing. Dance puts embodiment in the spotlight, making it undeniable in a way that also renders the "transparency" of the body impossible, to reuse Jane Gallop's (1999) term from *Thinking Through the Body* (p. 3). The dancing body presents itself as a thinking organism that is not isolated from and guided by the mind, but is constantly in an intrinsic collaboration with the mind—the body cannot be rendered transparent nor inconsequential through this perspective. In the context of this thesis, dance functioned as a form of research and reflection in both literal and theoretical senses; dance supported me in not just knowing, but feeling, what *more* may look like for queer subjects.

This thesis was created alongside a dance capstone piece grounded in my lived research as a dancer and as a member of Professor Barbie Diewald's Advanced Seminar in Dance. My piece is titled "returning, again" and features four dancers: Ava Garland, Cherace Lin, Hannah San Clemente, and Emma Uva. We began rehearsing in September of 2024, meeting twice a week to move, research, and reflect together (see Appendix A to view a video of "returning, again, Appendix B for a detailed synopsis, and Appendix C for credits). It was performed in the 2025 Senior Capstone Dance Concert, "Soul Ties," which featured works from seven other senior dance students (see Appendix D for images of the concert posters and Appendix E for the "Soul Ties" program). The performances of this piece, and the aesthetic components that are discernible to its audiences, reflected only a small part of the collaborative dance-making

process; in a conversation with Professor Diewald, she humorously suggested that the performances could be understood as "side-effects" of the process. In many ways, a performable piece can be understood as a side effect, or a consequence, of a much longer process of researching and making. Creating a capstone piece to be performed is a requirement of the Advanced Seminar in Dance which reflects the assumption that performance—as the component of a process that is marketable to a public—marks the end of a process. I do not understand "returning, again," the performed piece, to be a realization or culmination of the research and rehearsal process. Instead, I understand the piece itself and its performances to be a few of the almost infinite possibilities for what this process could have generated—the process is not a means to a static end, but a path holding multiplicitous potentials.

This third and final chapter is itself an incomplete, ongoing, and fragmentary reflection on "returning, again" and my relationship to the process and the piece both of which, now, live in my past. In many ways, these reflections feel like they are coming too late—my discussion of specific dance-making practices feels belated because this thesis is just as much about dance as it is about intuition, disidentification, and other strategies for moving, working, and being in resistance to Cartesian and heteronormative mainstreams. In this chapter, I engage with intuitively queer knowing as it emerged in the rehearsal and making process of "returning, again," citing moments of theoretical connection with other concepts that I have explored in this thesis. Ultimately, I cannot do justice to all of the thinkers and creators who have inspired the eclectic, queer world of "returning, again," and my reflections on and with them are inevitably incomplete. However, I would be remiss not to further articulate my engagements with particular figures and my partial, situated perspective in relation to their work. I elaborate more deeply on my appreciation for Marga Gomez's (1996) work and the possibilities for disidentificatory, queer

glamor that she puts forward; I also explore my own formative, queer memory—which has resurfaced in my consciousness through those discussed by Gomez and Muñoz (1999)—of watching part of an episode of MTV's (2022) *Parental Control*. This remembering facilitates a further explanation of queer glamor and unstable identification, and how these ideas figured into my creative desires for "returning, again." Briefly, I consider Willi Ninja Field—who is known as the grandfather of Vogue dance and a key figure in the New York City Ball scene of the 1980s—as another key figure in my stylistic approach to dance-making. Through viewing documentaries featuring Ninja and his approach to dance, I further developed a comprehension of queer glamor that draws on histories of queer aesthetics across time. As I will further discuss, the power of performance work to demonstrate such crossings and mergings of queer representations is revealed through the impossible, non-linear, messy, and queer world produced within rehearsals for and performances of "returning, again."

Although the form of this thesis demands some semblance of linearity in terms of providing appropriate background information and discussions of the theoretical frameworks from which I am drawing, the actual process of writing and making were intensely non-linear; dance and dancing shaped this process at every moment, supporting me to acknowledge how my intuitions felt in my body, translated to movement, and could be recorded, if at all. In other words, "returning, again" is not a separate project that can be divorced from this thesis, but an invaluable site for *feeling and moving through* my ideas and those of my dancers. Throughout these final final pages, I look to Clare Croft's (2017) work in *Queer Dance: Meanings and Makings* in order to summarize and expand upon how I conceptualize intuition as a research method that may exist within and outside of the academy, but always in resistance to the academy's Cartesian underpinnings. A text on queerness in dance and dance alongside queer

scholarship is especially valuable in this context because it exemplifies the richness of dance studies in relation to critical theories.

Dancing Through and With Intuition

"returning, again"—the performable piece—is made up of six distinct sections, which I understand as scenes, that correspond to the music used in each section. My dancers and I referred to these sections by the title of the song used—throughout the rest of this chapter, I will refer to specific sections of "returning, again" with these titles. The scenes, in order, are: "Night And Day," "Souvenir d'Italie," "Saturn in Return, part 1," "open this wall," "I Feel For You," and "Saturn in Return, part 2" (see Appendix A to view a video of "returning, again" and Appendix B for a detailed synopsis of the piece's scenes). The performances of the piece, as Professor Diewald suggested, are side-effects of the process; rehearsing, writing, and reflecting were not means to an end but the stuff, the material, of "returning, again" and of this thesis.

I believe that intuition—as I understand it as a research method—was saliently involved in the choreographing and rehearsal process for "returning, again"; of course, these are not the only facets of this thesis/capstone project in which intuition emerged, but the ones in which intuition feels most undeniable, largely because dancing makes embodiment undeniable to an extent that *feels* different from the other forms of making that have been involved in this thesis. Activating and encouraging intuition within my dance-making practices was my primary focus in my preparation for rehearsals and the collaborations between myself and my dancers during rehearsals. In movement practices, I understand intuition, in short, as a practice of ease, emotional awareness, and oftentimes an embracing of my first thought as my best thought.[22]

[22] This idea of "first thought, best thought" was first introduced to me by Professor Ellie Goudie-Averill in her process for a contemporary ballet piece for the '23 Mount Holyoke Faculty Concert titled "other astonishments." In rehearsals, we frequently made phrases in duos and trios that drew from improvisations in which we were instructed to lead with our first thoughts. We improvised in response to poetry and to viewing each other's improvisations, eventually building longer sections of the piece through collections of shorter phrases made individually and

Intuition in dance is built on so much more than an instantaneous, fleeting moment of easeful knowing, but on the extensive movement histories that live in one's bodies in combination with their relationship to space, time, and others present in a particular space and time. The movements that feel most intuitive may be those with which we have had the most experience, the ones which literally feel easier on our bodies, or they may be those that feel like powerful declarations of identity. Recognizing and valuing intuition in the processes of making and interpreting dance is a vital component in understanding dance, more broadly, as never complete, never static. As a dancer, sometimes your body simply knows what movement comes next after you lose your way in a phrase. As I watched my dancers dance through choreography that we created together, I observed how their bodies chose to adapt the movements based on variations in timing, fullness, or their spatial relationships to one another. I observed how they intuitively added an extra turn at a moment when they arrived at a new spot a little too early or lingered a little longer if they knew that another dancer needed to reach them. In rehearsals and performances, dancers are constantly activating intuitive knowing that centers the body in relation to other bodies, time, and space. We are always becoming, together, through dance. Another important part of this becoming is that it is never complete, always ongoing. Process, in this case, does not imply a linear progression towards some predefined end point or result, but a more fragmentary becoming that draws on personal and collective identities and histories across time.

My approach to actually making dance, in collaboration with Ava, Cherace, Hannah, and Emma, primarily emerged from my lived experiences working and dancing with faculty and student choreographers at Mount Holyoke. Professor Ellie Goudie-Averill and her employment

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collectively. This is an idea to which I constantly return, especially when I am not sure what to do next when creating a movement phrase.

of "first thought, best thought," influenced me to embrace a similar philosophy of composition in my improvisations, in the compositional exercises that my dancers and I completed together, and in the processing of refining movements. Professor Goudie-Averill shaped her piece, "other astonishments," through improvisational collaborations in a way that I had not experienced previously; exploring this approach encouraged me to understand intuition not just as an initiator of dance-making, of stringing movements together, but also as a source of insight regarding the shaping and molding of a phrase or section of dance. Similar practices have been engaged by many of the student choreographers with whom I have worked at Mount Holyoke, and their approaches to dance-making have influenced and shaped mine to a great extent.[23] Essentially, my choreographic practice emerges as a collection of strategies, activities, approaches, and potentials that I have experienced as a dancer working alongside other dancers; just as I was—and will continue to be—created as a dancer through other choreographers' processes, I have honed my practice of choreographing in relation to these past experiences.

Improvisation and Interpretation

In my approach to dance-making, I treat improvisation as the seed of a movement phrase—it is the point from which movement vocabulary and tone grows or proliferates. I employed improvisation throughout the rehearsal process for "returning, again" to generate a

[23] I would be remiss not to acknowledge a few of the student choreographers who deeply influenced the choreographic practices that I employed in rehearsals for "returning, again"; although they took different approaches, these choreographers all centered improvisation within their practices in a way that, I feel, is aligned with Professor Goudie-Averill's "first thought, best thought" philosophy. In rehearsals for their 2023 dance capstone, "The Burlesque that Never Starts," Sam Murray utilized "catching" as a way to reinterpret movement phrases. "Catching" is a choreographic practice that is primarily credited to the postmodern choreographer Trisha Brown. Sam often presented a phrase to us during rehearsals, danced through it two or three times, and then asked us to make our own phrases inspired by that one, drawing from and emphasizing moments and movements that had caught our attentions while watching. In rehearsals for August Grace's 2023 dance capstone, "vada aunt nell," the vast majority of the movement was created through improvisation—much of the piece remained improvisational throughout the process and in performance. Thirdly, my dear friend, Hope Wampler, re-choreographed the majority of their 2024 capstone piece, "A Fervent Reprise" after asking us to improvise to the sound track of the piece, using movements and partnering work that we had already put together to make a first draft of the piece. Although the final piece reflected a similar movement vocabulary as the first version, Hope decided to rework the storyline in relation to the potential relationships and ideas that they gleaned from our improvisations.

seed from which a section of movement could be created in collaboration with Ava, Cherace, Hannah, and Emma. Improvisation for me, was a specific practice in that it always felt most authentic and intuitive when I was able to improvise alone in my room, listening to music that I loved—I also rarely had a clear goal in mind regarding how I wanted the improvisation to progress. Music was a key part of this practice, and I often used it as the guide for my movements, allowing my body to respond intuitively to what I was hearing. Setting these improvisations to Jazz and Disco engaged my visceral sense of groove, or rhythm, and invoked feelings of nostalgia—I grew up listening to these genres with my parents. Listening and dancing to music that holds nostalgic ties to a younger me, an earlier time in my life, activated a disidentificatory desire for the past much like that which Gomez (1996) describes regarding what it means for her to be a "nostalgia queen" (p. 191). Dwelling on past memories set to particular songs and musical genres is a means of recapturing something of my past, through a reinterpretation that is facilitated by my present self. This unstable, intersubjective connection to my past engages intuition in the sense that it filters into my present consciousness in a way that feels easeful; this connection is realized through my improvisations set to particular songs that remind me of that past.

Early in the rehearsal process for "returning, again," I tried recording my improvisations and watching them back, retaining the moments that stuck with me in order to create a phrase that my dancers and I would develop further in rehearsal. This method was ultimately unhelpful in encouraging me to trust my first thoughts; the knowledge that I was recording my improvisations—a practice that can feel quite vulnerable in the first place—and that I would have a record, or a product, to review made the practice feel more forced. I stopped recording myself and started improvising in small chunks of movement, small enough that I could retain

them, repeat them over and over, and commit them to memory. I would string these chunks together to make phrases and bring those phrases to rehearsals; I taught them to my dancers—roughly, so they had the general shape of the phrase but not many details—and then watched them perform the phrase. Teaching in this way allowed me to watch a version of movement that was in a process of active reinterpretation by my dancers, and also revealed the differences in interpretation that emerged between us. I encouraged the dancers to make the phrases their own, and was often resistant to providing specific "corrections" regarding how they were performing a phrase or movement. My role as a choreographer, in this case, was primarily to support my dancers in working through ambiguity in order to shape the movement to their bodies, environment, relationships to one another, and musical cues. Prioritizing their rich dance and personal histories yielded movements—solo and in unison—that were, I believe, reflective of the active role that intuition plays in shaping movement, even when it is performed over and over again.

Looking to the impact of music in this process, the musical track that held and holds the most nostalgia for me within "returning, again" was Artie Shaw's version of "Night And Day." My maternal grandfather loved Artie Shaw and this song (originally written by Cole Porter) was used in the 1934 film *The Gay Divorcee* featuring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, as stated by Melissa Block (2000) in an NPR broadcast about Porter's musical career. I grew up watching movies from this era, adoring the charm of stars like Astaire and Rogers, reveling in the inevitability of a romantic (heterosexual) end. Similar themes of glamor and romance are present in the beginning of "returning, again" especially through the hyper-stylized, gestural movements that characterize this section of the piece. Interestingly, the three phrases that constitute this section emerged from my improvisations and were initially composed of much slower, flowing

movements. The phrases that I initially brought to my dancers were also set to "Smooth Operator" by Sade and the movement was only significantly altered when we started dancing through it alongside "Night And Day." My dancers' intuitions altered the tone of the movement, developing a quality of performance that was more evocative of 1930s Jazz dance. This was not down to directions or stylistic clarifications from me, but from the intuitions of Ava, Hannah, Cherace, and Emma as they shaped the movement in relation to the music. Their intuitions emerged through their own personal, sometimes nostalgic, associations with Jazz music and dance, which we discussed in rehearsals. Their particular experiences with dance training also influenced their movement, producing that which sometimes emerged from habit, from ease, or from physical comfort; at other times, their intuitions compelled them to take risks and make surprising choices. Regardless of the particular outcome, their associations and embodied histories produced movement that was not so much static or set, but always open to change and responsive to musical, physical, and affective shifts.

To give further context for the sections of "returning, again" in which this phrase material was eventually performed, "Night And Day" began with a duet featuring Hannah and Ava, a duet in which their relationship to one another shifted from neutral to suggestively romantic as they became physically closer and lingered in moments of contact. Once Cherace and Emma joined them in movement, this potential for intimacy appeared to be broken and the dancers moved closer and closer to the audience; they performed, enthusiastically, for the audience at the same time as they transgressed the implied division that separates audience from performers. The potential for romance re-emerged between Cherace and Emma, briefly, before an abrupt musical change that shattered the apparent relationships between both pairs of dancers. In *The Queer Art of Failure*, Jack Halberstam (2011) elaborates on a queer aesthetic as a "particular ethos of

resignation to failure, to lack of progress and a particular form of darkness, a negativity really" (p. 96). In "Night And Day," my dancers performed failure and negativity through the loss of romantic potential and the development of explicitly queer, monogamous relationships that would provide the piece with a more obvious narrative structure or storyline. I understand this appeal to a queer aesthetic as a stepping away from expected linearity in favor of fragmentation, subverting the notion that performance work does and should contain a discernible storyline and easily interpretable relationships between characters or performers. I believe that this subversion allows for intuition to play a more active role in viewing because I know that the audiences of "returning, again" looked for—and expected to find—some kind of plot, reading into the moments of physical contact that signify glimpses of intimacy. What they actually gleaned from "returning, again" was largely determined by their intuitions and what representational potentials that their intuitions offered. Ultimately, I hope and anticipate that queer audience members created queer stories of their own while watching "returning, again."

Within the canon of classic Hollywood cinema, explicitly queer storylines and characters were made impossible. Of course, this does not mean that traces of queerness did not and/or do not exist in this age of media; *The Gay Divorcee* certainly offers potentials for queer readings, even beyond that of its title. Additionally, the glamor and allure of Hollywood has been transformed into a decidedly queer aesthetic in a great deal of performance work created and featuring queer individuals, such as Gomez's (1996) *MGisPW&G*. Glamor, through a queer perspective, can act and provide interpretive potentials as a device of concealment—glamor may conceal something or be concealed itself. For example, in classical Hollywood cinema the glamor of blissful heteronormativity may be read as a cover for its actual impossibility, its illusory grasp on the hearts and minds of its audience. In *MGisPW&G*, disguises function as

concealment of the lesbians' identities, despite the fact that Gomez is able to read these disguises not as signifiers of abasement, but as subversive forms of glamor. The smokiness of this scene emphasizes the multiplicitous and oftentimes contradictory representational potentials of glamor as a queer aesthetic. In "Night And Day," Ava, Cherace, Hannah, and Emma are certainly glamorous, but they are also not quite stable characters with clear relationships to one another.

I believe that queer dance like that performed in "returning, again" or, roughly, dance that looks to disrupt heteronormative ways of thinking and being in relation, holds a particularly acute potential for inviting queer interpretations. Reflecting on the discursive and political powers of queer dance, Croft (2017) asks: "How does queerness exist in the realm of affect and touch, and what then might we find out about queerness through these pleasurable and complex bodily ways of knowing?" (p. 14). The "realm of affect and touch" is not a static location, but a paradoxical state of inevitable embodiment paired with relational instability; we exist here at the same time as we exist across time and space, through our intuitions and the subjective ties that they create between past and present selves. In dance, especially queer dance, we perform whole worlds of affect and touch. In "returning, again," physical contact and the exchange of weight was a primary focus in many rehearsals; exerting force on another individual is a counterintuitive act, requiring practice and exploration. As my dancers and I navigated weight sharing, asking them to lean as far as possible into moments of physical exchange was a strategy for understanding the counterintuition involved in such an act. Allowing someone else to hold your weight, and holding theirs, engages physical and mental energy and requires a level of (often uncomfortable) intimacy. Of course, touch is simultaneously an invaluable potential for subversion in and through queer dance. As Croft states, "The slide of a hand across a hipbone might be just as much an act of coming out as an announcement offered in words" (p. 14). Touch

allows for performances of outness and queer intimacy, as are present when Hannah traces the line of Ava's shoulders, her hand heavy, and Ava does the same. These moments are especially charged and poignant in the context of a queer history of erasure, of intimacies hidden. Gomez's dramatization of her moment of interpellation as a lesbian, although very real to child Gomez, was hidden from her mother's view. At the same time, she could not touch the lesbian who called her "Cara Mia" (Gomez, 1996, p. 196). Thus, touch emerged in "returning, again" as an exploration of queer and unstable intimacy and embodiment that gladly invited multiplicitous queer interpretations.

Collaboration and Fragmentation

Besides bringing movement phrases to my dancers in rehearsals, inviting intentional collaboration constructed the other material of "returning, again." One of my favorite methods for generating movement collaboratively was to make a phrase standing in a circle facing each other; each person added a movement and we continued in the same order until we came to a point that felt like an ending.[24] The direction that I usually gave before starting this activity was to trust your first thought, to go with whatever movement that felt natural in relation to the preceding one. I love this approach because it enabled us to move both collectively and individually, allowing fragments of our embodied histories as dancers to emerge and blend, informing one another. This strategy for making movement together was also counterintuitive in that it asked us to trust our first thoughts—I understand this practice as a form of improvisation, but with an audience. I quickly learned that it is easy to tell dancers to do whatever feels intuitive to them, but another to actually support them to do so. I remember that Emma and Cherace struggled to add to the phrase when we did this activity together because they wanted to produce

[24] I first tried this strategy for collaborative choreographing alongside Molly Brown, Quinn Suomala, Hannah San Clemente, Robyn Pilecki, and Journey Freedman in rehearsals for Molly and Quinn's 2024 piece "I See You."

something “good,” something that I would like or that would “make sense” in the movement vocabulary of the phrase.

Of course, the point of this activity was not for the dancers to produce something that I wanted, but to come up with something that felt right to them in the moment. I believe that it can be deeply generative to make movement that is not necessarily cohesive and does not appear to make sense; fragmentation, in this form, is a key facet of intuitive making because intuitions themselves are not uniformly cohesive or sensical. Oftentimes however, fragmentation does not read as such in performed dance work. Although the process of making and the initial product of collaborative choreographing in which my dancers and I engaged was fragmented, even sometimes disjointed, our movements became cohesive over time; moments of disconnection smoothed out into whole, cohesive phrases that did appear to make sense in context. Halberstam’s (2011) thinking on low theory as a form of resistance to the—literal and figurative—order of the academy is helpful in conceptualizing the value that I understand lies in the fragmentary aspects of dance-making. Low theory holds “getting lost” as a valuable approach to knowledge production that may exist outside of written and verbal discourses circulating within academic institutions (p. 18). Describing low theory in conversation with failure (the failure to adhere to traditional, expected, academic modes of thinking and knowing), Halberstam explains that “these modes of unbeing and unbecoming propose a different relation to knowledge” (p. 23). I believe that unbeing and unbecoming occur in the failure that accompanies not thinking too hard about what to add next to a movement phrase and allowing your first thought to be your full contribution; unbeing and unbecoming are practices of resistance to expectations and categories—especially as they proliferate in the academy and marginalize certain forms of knowing—that manifest as refusals to adhere to them. By departing from the

idea that dancers must prove themselves in order to be legitimate academics, we resist the constraints that the academy places on dance studies regarding what it should be, what it should produce. Thus, other ways of making and experiencing movement may be found and our intuitions may emerge as rich sites of knowing. Making a movement phrase that was not necessarily cohesive was a strategy for my dancers and I to practice failure, to get lost in the process, and to explore the paradox that emerges in the counterintuitive nature of our intuitions in dance-making.

Failure

Failure followed me throughout the rehearsal process for "returning, again," in ways that were both intentional—as with the collaborative, fragmentary phrase-building practices with which my dancers and I engaged—and unintentional. In order to reflect on the themes and ideas that emerged in rehearsals and in my research, I journaled; after most rehearsals, I wrote a few pages about the experience, what progress was made, and what I would like to explore further. Having this chronological account was helpful in tracking the evolution of "returning, again" and holding onto the pieces or ideas that emerged and required further development. I treated journaling as an intuitive practice in that I aimed not to censor myself while I was writing—my journal was like a dumping ground for any and all of my thoughts. My dancers and I journaled together a few times and their perspectives as individuals inside the process provided me with valuable insights regarding how I could support them as a choreographer, what they would like to know more about my research, and how intuition was emerging for them in rehearsals. However, over the two semesters that we spent working together, we only journaled together three times. My plan had been to journal together every week, at the end of rehearsal, so that we could reflect on the rehearsal as a whole. My failure to execute this plan, my forgetting, and my

loss of the potential information or nuances that more of my dancers' notes could have provided exemplify a failure of this thesis and my dance capstone. In other words, I missed so much that could have been—and was—there. Halberstam (2014) articulates such moments of failing as "a counterhegemonic discourse of losing," which often co-occurs with stupidity, or "not simply a lack of knowledge but… the limits of certain forms of knowing and certain ways of inhabiting structures of knowing" (pp. 11-12). Failure emerges in this thesis because I have essentially lost moments of insight because they do not exist in memory or record. Stupidity exists in this thesis because I have gotten myself stuck throughout the process, especially during rehearsals. Leading rehearsals always felt at least somewhat counterintuitive and uncomfortable to me; I often got lost in my directions, making my desires unclear to my dancers. I struggled through explanations of my textual research when they asked and failed to share the connections that I was making between the dance we were making together and developments in my written thesis work. In my journaling practice, I wrote extensively about these challenges (or failures) of articulation.[25]

At some point in the beginning of our second semester of rehearsals (I failed to write down when exactly this happened) I stopped pretending that I felt confident in my role as choreographer; I told my dancers something along the lines of "guys, I don't know what I'm doing please just go with it." I am aware that this falling short as a choreographer, as a leader of a rehearsal space, is a failure, but I believe that it also signifies a move away from the academic pressures to reach mastery. Stupidity, as articulated by Halberstam (2014), became a lens through which I could understand how the expectations that I placed upon myself as a choreographer were frequently unhelpful, often couched in the idea that I should be the "master" of rehearsals

[25] In the entry written after the first rehearsal for *returning again*, I begin with "Leading is hard! Expressing my ideas doesn't feel like a very intuitive thing—ironically." After the fourth rehearsal, I asked, "What do you do as a choreographer when you've given your dancers a task? I would like someone to tell me what to do." After the fifth, I reflected that "I don't feel confident in my presentation nor comfortable explaining my more abstract ideas. Is this failure generative?"

and the work itself. Through exploring my specific feelings about and relationship to the role of "leader," I determined how I could make this role more hospitable for me, how I could engage with methods of making and communicating that do feel intuitive. For example, I eventually found that I prefer to demonstrate movement without talking at the same time, just allowing myself to move through movements and explain in words later, if necessary. I also came to enjoy engaging in discussions during rehearsal that interrupted other activities; instead of forcing a particular point in a rehearsal to be dedicated to reflection, I found it more generative to allow discussion to emerge and deepen naturally. Thus, the idea of failure in this context is complicated; so much of what I have deemed as "failure" in this section of writing I have also reclaimed as valuable, alternative potentials for performing leadership. For example, I believe that my ambiguous instructions and the confusion that they created were vital collaborators in the process of making "returning, again." These moments encouraged, and perhaps forced, my dancers to chart their own paths through ambiguity and to trust their own intuitions, for which I continue to be deeply grateful.

Elaborating on Queer Glamor: *Queer Love in* Parental Control

Before discussing the final primary theme—return—that emerged in my dance-making process and reflections, I must mention another memory (my own) and a figure (Willi Ninja Field) that shaped my engagements with queerness, and more explicitly queer glamor, through dance. Firstly, my own memory of intuitively queer knowing, although not explicitly referenced in "returning, again," deepened my conceptualization of queer glamor and informed moments of affective shift within the piece; this memory also generated a connection based on partially shared experience between myself and Gomez which requires further elaboration. In *Contemporary Plays by Women of Color*, edited by Kathy A. Perkins and Roberta Uno, Gomez

(1996) has a spread that includes a short biography, artistic statement, a section from *MGisPW&G*, and excerpts from two other solo shows: *Memory Tricks* and *A Line Around the Block*. Through Muñoz's (1999) interpretation and Gomez's own reflections on the sketch, *MGisPW&G* has remained the most influential and salient example of disidentification and intuitive knowing for me, as I reflect on my own ongoing process of queer self-formation; although I was unable to view a recording of Gomez performing the sketch, it calls forcibly to my queer subjecthood and the workings of my post-out consciousness.

A memory that has reentered my consciousness since beginning my research on Gomez for this thesis is much like the one she recounts and dramatizes in *MGisPW&G*. I must have been around eight and was watching television, flipping through channels in a moment when my mother had left the room and I had tired of the PBS program we had been watching. I came across an episode of MTV's *Parental Control*, a show in which parents attempt to break up their teenage child and a lackluster partner by setting up their teenager on blind dates with alternative romantic prospects. The episode I came across centered femme Naomi and her goth-esque girlfriend Lexi, as well as Naomi's mother, Keo, and Keo's boyfriend, Bryan. I was able to find a recording of this episode, "Her girlfriend is a freak!," on YouTube from MTV Vault (2022); the episode was likely from the sixth season of *Parental Control* and aired in 2008 so I must have been watching a later rerun. At the time, all I saw was the tail end of the episode when Naomi chose to stay with Lexi (to Keo and Bryan's dismay) and the two shared a kiss, before I heard my mother's footsteps coming back down the hall and quickly flipped back to the safety of PBS. Although I do not recall feeling particularly fearful or uncomfortable while or after viewing this snippet, this memory has stayed with me. Although it occasionally crossed my mind prior to re-reading *Disidentifications* and analyzing the importance of Gomez's (1996) work to Muñoz's

(1999) theorizing, it holds much deeper significance to me as a queer subject in the present; just as Muñoz required Gomez's guidance in his remembering of Capote's "fantastic bitchiness," *MGisPW&G* initially presented to me by Muñoz "helped and even instructed [my] reremembering" of Naomi and Lexi (Muñoz, 1999, pp. 4-5).

As far as I can remember, this episode of *Parental Control* was my first exposure to queer individuals in the media and I recall registering this as decidedly, but inexplicably, "different" from the other representations of love and dating that I had been exposed to; the possibility that two women could be in love simply had not yet been presented to me. It is also important to note that, in this episode, neither Keo nor Bryan appeared to take any issue with Naomi's sexuality (she is bisexual) or her choice to date a woman. In fact, it seems that the issues Keo and Bryan had with Lexi were in regard to her general disregard for authority and bizarre preference for baby wipes over showers—these are understandable issues that contain no discernible traces of dislike rooted in homophobia, at least as far as I can discern. Neither questioned Naomi's bisexuality at any point during the episode and, although Keo chose shaggy-haired Michael as her pick to take Naomi on a date, Bryan chose hyper-feminine Christina. This depiction of an accepting environment in which Naomi was free to choose to continue loving the same woman, even when presented with other, parent-approved options, was very different from the phobic, smoky spectacle that Gomez (1996) describes in *MGisPW&G*.

Also, I do not think that my compulsion to flip back to PBS was necessarily rooted in a fearful expectation of my mother's disapproval regarding the depiction of queerness on *Parental Control*. Unlike Gomez, there was no reason for me to maintain a "homophobic expression" during any point in my upbringing with either of my parents (Muñoz, 1999, p. 3). I was very lucky that my first conscious exposure to queer representation was not one of queerness as abject

nor necessitating secrecy. Instead, this was a largely emotionally neutral experience that nevertheless stuck around, in fragments, within my consciousness. My reaction was allowed to be emotionally neutral and to carry less association with the negative because of the time and location of my childhood—I grew up in central Massachusetts with accepting, politically liberal parents. As far as I can remember, I did not view any particularly homophobic media representations of queer individuals during my childhood, and I certainly did not view homophobic reactions to queerness or queer individuals from the people closest to me during this time. In the context of the emotional neutrality or even relative positivity towards queerness that I associate with this memory, I disidentify with Gomez (1996) and her comedic retelling of her own formative, queer memory. Gomez's experience with lesbian representation yielded the compulsion to perform a counteridentification in order to maintain her safety, which also highlights the importance of social, cultural, and political context in determining what representations are accessible in the first place and how they are received. However, my viewing of queer individuals did not yield such a compulsion, but also did not simply facilitate an internal, conscious acceptance of my queerness. Viewing one positive representation of a queer relationship did not flip a switch that allowed me to unquestionably recognize and process my queerness, especially given the presence of homophobic representations and discourse in the mainstream of which I was later made more aware.

Rewatching this episode revealed to me that, although it provided a very different representation of queerness than presented by the lesbians on television in *MGisPW&G* (and other media featuring queer individuals produced during Gomez's childhood in the late 1960s), it still communicates the mysterious allure of queerness; Gomez's (1996) invocations of secrecy and disguise are echoed in the episode of *Parental Control* featuring Naomi and Lexi. Michael

and Naomi's date featured an obstacle course in a large parking lot that appeared to be on the side of a busy main road. Michael drove them to the lot in a white box truck and the two rode around the course on pocket bikes. In contrast, Christina took Naomi go-go dancing, complete with vibrantly patterned mini dresses, go-go boots, and wigs. Christina and Naomi danced together in a performance venue atop large platforms; there was no audience for their performance besides, of course, the film crew. The locale of their date, its almost unsettling emptiness, bizarrely contrasted with that of Naomi's penny bike date with Michael. The vacancy of the performance venue in which Naomi and Christina danced, in combination with their disguise-like costumes, brings to mind the "veil of secrecy" under which the lesbians that Gomez saw on television felt they had to operate for their safety, wigs and all (Gomez, 1996, p. 196).

I believe that Christina and Naomi perform a vision of a queer past, one that allows queer women to dance for and with one another, romantically, and parallels Gomez's (1996) longing for "*the life*," regardless of the "sanitized and heteronormativized" norms offered by "*the community*" (Muñoz, 1999, p. 34). This performance projects into the future, subversively challenging the notion that "*the life*"—one of queer secrecy—offers queers only abjection and that "*the community*" offers desirable safety and acceptance; in this way, there is a resistance to choosing one or the other (past or present) in favor of a disidentification with both, allowing potentials for experiencing, feeling, and performing queerness to abound. Christina and Naomi demonstrate a similarly nostalgic desire to embody aesthetics of the past, further emphasizing the role of nostalgia as a device for queer becoming through non-linearity. Gomez's (1996) declaration in *Contemporary Plays by Women of Color* that, "I will always be a nostalgia queen even though I realize the present and future offer more for someone of my ethnic background and sexual orientation" illustrates this disidentificatory tension between past and present (p. 191).

Nostalgia, I believe, can be understood as an intuitive longing for fragments of the past, but not necessarily the full political or social context of that past. It is possible to hold onto these fragments for what they offer affectively and/or aesthetically through disidentification, further complicating understandings of the construction of our (stable) selves in relationships to (linear) time.

Reflection on my memory of *Parental Control* has revealed its relevance to my early and ongoing process of queer becoming, for revisiting this memory and watching the episode in full allowed me to understand the intersubjective relationship between my present, openly queer self and eight-year-old, pre-out consciousness. At the same time that this relationship crosses time and space, it also illustrates that my past and present are co-constitutive; just as Gomez (1996) and Muñoz (1999) present the possibility for reading the complementary workings of intersubjectivity and the intrapsychic—which I pull from Jessica Benjamin's (1990) theorizing on object relations and identity formation—in their constructions of queer selves across time, I read the same in my memory. My current understanding of this memory is born out of an interpretation of a younger self, a construction of that self that is not necessarily accurate yet functions in service of my current queer subjectivity. In this way, my intrapsychic "uses" this construction in the project of present (and future) self-formation, balancing out the intersubjective tie that enables this "using" to be possible in the first place. Thus, this memory is formatively queer in that it implies a legible, early trace of my queerness as well as a queer, unstable blurring between past, present, and future selves. I must also articulate that this memory means a lot for me as a queer subject, now. In my theorizations with Muñoz and Gomez, I held an ever-present knowing that I appreciated their work because, to some extent, I understood it on

a visceral level; I experienced a moment of knowing that was similar to theirs, one that I can now look back on as a similar instance of queer knowing.

Voguing with Willi Ninja[26]

Regarding another key figure in my research and exploration of intuitively queer knowing through dance, I first encountered Willi Ninja Field within the documentary worlds of *Paris is Burning*, directed by Jennie Livingston[27] (1990), and *Voguing: The Message*, directed by David Bronstein, Dorothy Low, and Jack Walworth; *Voguing: The Message* was produced in 1988 but reposted on YouTube by The Ballroom History Nerd (2024). These documentaries center the lives of queer folks of color—many of whom were drag queens, dancers, and/or sex workers—in the midst of New York City's 1980s Ball culture, or the underground queer club scene that provided queer folks with spaces for experimenting with fashion, gender, and movement. Livingston explores the social inequalities and challenges experienced by queer communities of color in New York at the time, including the AIDS crisis and violence rooted in

[26] I had grand intentions of researching and writing more substantially on Willi Ninja Field and on the 1980s Ballroom scene. Although I failed to do so, my failure emphasizes my research process as fragmented and always partial. I considered completely omitting a discussion of Field, their work in Voguing, and Ball culture given the limited nature of my knowledge; I believe, now, that completely omitting these ideas would only reproduce the violence of erasure and silencing of academic archives and scholarship. Willi Ninja's voice is not one that is easily locatable within archives and scholarship, despite his presence in documentaries like *Paris is Burning* and *Voguing: The Message*. Thus, I believe that this section, about him and about the Ball scene, is a failure, but one that could not have been left out of this thesis.

[27] Controversy sprang up regarding *Paris is Burning* and director Jennie Livingston (who is a white lesbian) after bell hooks' (2014) scathing discussion of the documentary in *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. In her chapter, "Is Paris Burning?" hooks argues that Livingston's portrayal of Ball culture, a site created by and for queers of color, is an appropriation; she condemns Livingston for gaining fame from the documentary's production despite the fact that the subjects of her documentary received no compensation for their appearances. hooks also holds that drag, and the importance of drag in Ballroom culture, presents a harmful caricaturization of femininity that exalts white femininity and womanhood. Judith Butler (2011) responds to hooks' criticisms in *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* by framing an argument around the power of drag and queerness in subverting the illusory stability of heterosexuality as a system of oppression. In her chapter, "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion," Butler argues that the gender bending possibilities that proliferate within the Ball scene powerfully signify the instability of gender and its potentials for identification and presentation. Butler understands Livingston's framing of Ball culture as representative of her own partial perspective, one that elicits less of a cut-and-dry appropriation and more of an exposing of the complexity of appropriation as it is manifested through the film and through Ball culture. In so doing, Butler articulates that *Paris is Burning* "documents neither an efficacious insurrection nor a painful resubordination, but an unstable coexistence of both" (p. 95).

racism, homophobia, and transphobia. *Voguing: The Message* includes a brief description of Voguing and queer club culture, highlighting Field, who is one of the pioneers of Vogue dance; in this film, Field (who was mother for the House of Ninja) describes many of the major components of Ballroom culture including Houses (which resemble cliques or extended chosen families that include mothers and fathers) and Ballroom categories (such as face, fashion, and performance). Dual roles of community and individuality within Ballroom culture are made clear here, for although there is an emphasis on individual performance, performers are members of a House, or queer family, that provides support in all forms.

Looking to Vogue as a particularly prominent invention of the Ball scene, Ninja describes Voguing as modeling reinvigorated given that many of the movements are inspired by poses seen in fashion magazines; In *Voguing: The Message*, Field defines "Voguing as something created within the gay community, a new way to express ourselves but in the form of dance" (Bronstein, et al., 1988, 3:11-3:18). In other words, Voguing is a creative, queer reinterpretation, or disidentification, with mainstream representations of modeling and fashion. Technical elements of Vogue, according to Field, include "clean lines, a good style, no sloppiness" (Bronstein et al., 1988, 1:48-1:52). *Paris is Burning* and *Voguing: The Message* both include clips of Field dancing on video sets and in queer clubs. I have deep admiration for Voguing as a style of queer dance, as a means of reworking mainstream representations through movement, but especially for the way it is performed by Field; at the same time as Field articulates his queer identity through Voguing, he also performs instability. At one moment in *Paris is Burning*, he uses his hand like a compact and becomes a queen doing her makeup. At another moment, he impressively balances on the ball of one foot, hyperextending his arms behind his head, and drops into a dip. I have not trained in Voguing, I will never meet Field (he passed away in 2006),

and I was born too late to experience Ball culture as it once was in the ‘80s, but the recorded material of Field Voguing offers me a glimpse into his own approach to movement that is deeply queer and glamorous. Field’s work, alongside that of Gomez, instructed me regarding how queer glamor can emerge in dance and provided me with another queer past to which I desired to call throughout “returning, again.”

Return

Looking to intuition as an activation of past histories necessitates a looking back, a revisiting of the past over and over again, as was the case for Muñoz (1999) in his reconstruction of a formative queer memory in relation to the insights about identity and return offered in Gomez’s (1996) *MGisPW&G*. The practice of return and returning were major parts of my research for my dance capstone and this thesis; besides the recorded queer pasts that I have found, I have also returned to my older journal entries, pieces of academic writing, and recorded movement phrases frequently over the last year, allowing my past work to contribute to my work in the present. I understand this looking to past work not as a way of moving beyond this work—or who I was when I created it—but as a way of integrating it and reiterating it within the present. My research prior to beginning rehearsals for “returning, again” began with a paper that accompanied a dance piece that I choreographed in my sophomore year, titled “you’re getting the hang of it.”[28] I have read this paper several times over the last two semesters, looking for seeds of inspiration, or connections that I had already made and articulated. Kathleen Ryan (2010), in her article “Making Pathways: Inventing Textual Research Methods in Feminist Rhetorical Studies,” names this process of return “recovery” (p. 90). Ryan describes herself as a feminist pragmatic

[28] “you’re getting the hang of it” was part of the 2023 student dance concert at Mount Holyoke and featured five dancers: Lily Callahan, Vivian Eisenmann, Becky Marcus, Robyn Pilecki, and Quinn Suomala. This piece primarily explored musicality and groove, drawing from my experiences training in Jazz dance and textual research on contemporary Jazz dancers and choreographers including LaTasha Barnes and Kimberley Cooper.

rhetorician and centers recovery in her research on feminist rhetoricians of the past; although she is not a dance studies scholar, recovery is a practice that, I believe, transcends disciplinary boundaries and can be especially generative in interdisciplinary work. We can also understand recovery (especially that of our own intellectual pasts) as disidentificatory because it involves a looking for *more* with the intention of making, shaping, reworking our past work. This does not imply a loss or transcendence of that work and its contextual position in the past, but a reusing that bridges past and present. For example, through reading and re-reading my work—and especially my process paper for "you're getting the hang of it"—I rediscovered my interest in groove as a form of tacit knowing in dance. Tacit knowledge is a concept that was initially introduced to me by Mari Sorri (1994) in "The Body Has Reasons: Tacit Knowing in Thinking and Making," but has roots in philosopher Michael Polanyi's writings on knowledge forms and embodiment; in short, tacit knowing is the knowledge regarding how a skill is performed such that the component parts of the skill exist in one's subsidiary awareness, or unconscious mind. Tacit knowing is compatible with my thinking on intuition and, although it did not explicitly appear in my theorizing, served as a point of recovery for these current projects.

Themes of returning and reconfiguring are present in Croft's (2017) analysis of queer dance as the act and performance of "the pleasures *and* difficulties of moving between multiple, layered identities. Frustration and diminishment physically reframed as strength. Images that do not immediately make sense, but that somehow gather force" (p. 1) Through queer dance, we may revel in the significations of multiple, ambiguous meanings generated through return in the way that Gomez revels in a phobic lesbian image, in the way that I found clarity in recalling Lexi and Naomi from *Parental Control*. Instead of detachment, we find earnest attachment through queer dance—I believe that this is how our work and ideas, and we, may "gather force." Force

can exist in the simplest of repetitions and the most glaring of references, that are also always up for interpretation; recovery does not imply complete reproduction much in the same way that it does not offer transcendence. It is the disidentifying subject who can take "pleasures *and* difficulties" and read them not as facets of a static identity, but as potentials that signify—oftentimes unexpected—unstable attachments. Our intuitions pull us, compel us, and perhaps force us to be attached and to hold on, even to phobic images that are intended to convey abjection.

I feel deeply attached to the music throughout "returning, again." The first track, Artie Shaw's "Night And Day," reminds me of my grandfather and the fifth track, "I Feel For You" by Chaka Khan, invokes an awareness of queer pasts, of dark queer clubs. The third track, "Saturn in Return" by the contemporary Jazz pianist Mad Keys, is the only piece of music that is repeated in "returning, again" and also the only song that did not already hold personal significance to me before beginning the rehearsal process. I chose to repeat this track—to return to it—in the piece because it represented an unexpected gathering of force. This track lacks the regular, countable rhythmicity that categorizes the other musical tracks that make up the soundscore in "returning, again." When I first encountered it, I was drawn to its irregularity but did not know how to set movement to it—my interest in groove largely emerges from the love that I have for dancing to and exploring musicality in relation to tracks that have a more regular rhythmicity, so exploring groove with Mad Key's track felt more difficult. I asked my dancers to improvise to "Saturn in Return," and its first appearance in "returning, again" remained improvisational throughout rehearsals and performances. Improvisation, as a strategy for activating dancers' intuitions, was a way to ask my dancers to become attached, to create movement that felt physically right for them to perform, over and over, to a particular musical

backdrop. Repetition, in this case, is another form of return and builds attachment, allowing intuitions to collect over time and gather force themselves. Embracing the lack of clear temporal cues in "Saturn in Return" felt like chaos when my dancers and I began to create this section of the piece— "Saturn in Return, part 1." However, by returning to this instability repeatedly, I became attached to its relevance within the piece as a whole, allowing it to "gather force" through the "pleasures *and* difficulties" that it offered (Croft, 2017, p. 1).

"Saturn in Return, part 2" signified a different kind of return. This section of "returning, again" allowed me to call to Naomi and Christina in *Parental Control*, on their go-go dancing date. "Saturn in Return, part 2" immediately followed the section set to Chaka Khan's "I Feel For You" which was high energy, pose-heavy, and very sassy. I envisioned that this section was set in a sparkling, glamorous queer club and the dancers were club performers who were simply having the time of their lives on stage; perhaps it was even set in an underground queer club in New York City, sometime in the 1980s. Additionally, "I Feel For You" reminds me of the flashiness of Naomi and Christina's costumes and of their unabashed queerness which contrasts with the sudden shift to melancholy and slowiness in "Saturn in Return, part 2." This particular section reminds me that Naomi and Christina, despite their enthusiasm, were in a vacant performance space. There is a gloominess that I feel when I remember this and the final section of "returning, again" calls to such gloominess. The affective shift between sections—during which the dancers drop their energetic performance and stare, wistfully, to the audience and then to each other—further signifies the eternal coexistence of "pleasures *and* difficulties" in queerness (Croft, 2017, p. 1). Like Gomez's lesbians, my dancers become "very depressed, very gloomy" in "Saturn in Return, part 2" (Gomez, 1996, p. 196).

It felt right to end "returning, again" on this moment of doom and gloom because it marked what I understand to be the power of a queer negative, of a negativity that is not essential but in flux and always, somehow, deeply glamorous. Through interrupting the audience's enjoyment of the fun and positivity of "I Feel For You," I believe that my dancers and I provided an opportunity for reading *more* in the representations of queerness that we offered, for finding the unstable locations between negativity and positivity. There is negativity, stigma, and gloom in the world of 1980s Ball culture, in Lexi and Naomi's episode of *Parental Control*, and certainly in Gomez's comedy. At the same time, there is also joy, allure, and potential for reading queer subversion in all of these contexts. I hold negativity and positivity in my conceptualization of queer glamor as co-constitutive and not opposite poles of an affective continuum.

Closing the Curtain

I end this chapter on a quote from Croft (2017) that feels especially evocative of what I believe queer dance is and can be. Croft writes, "Dance, with its poetic porosity and generative failure to convey direct meaning, engages productively and provocatively with queer's slippery, shapeshifting sensibility" (p. 10). Queerness, intuition, and dance are all spheres of making and/or being that often evade articulation, but bask in the potentials contained within their ambiguities. In no way did I come out of the rehearsal process for "returning, again"—nor that of writing this thesis—with a notion of what creative, interdisciplinary research using an intuitive and disidentificatory framework *should* look like; creating something like a template or curriculum for making through and with this framework would not serve such work. As my writing, researching, and dance-making have progressed, it has become glaringly obvious that this framework involves working through trial and error, doubt, and failure. In the same way, navigating the complexity of working intuitively (first thought, best thought, perhaps) is

not—and cannot be—prescriptive because intuition involves a rejection of mainstream notions of mastery, of the idea that one can master one's own relationship to self, others, process, and research. These relationships are always in flux, always shifting and often non-linear across time and space. I believe that if we accept this fluidity and ambiguity, in ourselves and in our work, we can continue to see *more*, and envision *more* for our queer futures.

TO CONCLUDE[29]

This conclusion is not meant to be an ending that transcends or moves beyond the ideas that I have presented so far in this thesis. I do not desire to wrap up, to package these ideas into a contained, neat conclusion especially because our intuitions are unwieldy and I feel that this conclusion should reflect this unwieldiness, at least to some extent in its form.[30] The Dance, like intuition, can not be articulated in full through language; in the same way, language and its creative potentials for expression cannot be replaced by dance in rehearsal or performance. In *The Art of Wondering: A Revisionist Return to the History of Rhetoric*, William A. Covino (1988) describes the unstable nature of composition in a similarly unstable public sphere. He understands Cartesian rationality to be a failure in that it falls short in accounting for instability, and instead functions through illusory absolutes. Although Covino is writing in regard to written composition, I believe that his theorizing can be applied to dance-making in much the same way. He expounds that:

> Without minimizing the importance of making up one's mind, or of creating a finished document, and with appreciation for the utility and beauty of cogent prose, I question the overriding preference for a closed form as the token of literacy. And I call for a philosophy of composition that exploits writing as a mode of *avoiding* rather than *intending* closure (pp. 129-130).

My resistance to conclude does not signify personal indecision nor even the desire to produce a document that is necessarily structurally oppositional to the academic paper. As

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[29] Myla Brilliant's 2021 thesis work, *Type One Cybernetics: Biotechnical Embodiment as a Crip/Queer Site of Feminist Knowledge Production* was immensely helpful in finding my way through this conclusion. Myla resists concluding their work, understanding a marked difference between "concluding" (the verb) and "conclusion" (the noun) (p. 83). They describe their conclusion, "To Conclude," as a reflection of concluding as process, as ongoing, not as an end to their embodied engagements with the content of their thesis.

[30] The final section of this conclusion is formatted as questions and numbered responses. The questions act as points of reflection for me regarding sites of rich queer potential, and the responses function as partial, fragmented answers to those questions. I chose to organize the conclusion in this way as a nod to my journaling practice. Identifying big questions and then working to construct an answer through gathering pieces of insight and interest was central to that practice and, therefore, the creation of this thesis. Calling to my tendencies in journaling in this conclusion also, I believe, supports my interest in framing my theorizations as always ongoing and inevitably incomplete.

Covino goes on to explain, *avoiding* conclusion is not a giving in to "obscurity" but inviting "ambiguity" as facilitator of "investigative writing" (p. 130). A conclusion to this thesis (regardless of how decisive and cogent, or ambiguous and inconclusive it may read), is not a conclusion of this work or research. Allowing ideas to be left open for interpretation and misunderstanding is generative in the same way that intuition and disidentification, as critical theories and research practices, are generative through their ambiguity, through their fluidity. The performances of "retuning, again" are not conclusions to a rehearsal process because the performances themselves were sites of unstable, intuitive being and becoming; my dancers and I *avoided* conclusion of the piece and the process insofar as we embraced the ways in which intuition would, inevitably, still live within performance. Dance, and its "poetic porosity," provided a wonderful and messy medium for finding something *more* than closure throughout this process (Croft, 2017, p. 10).

I do not understand this conclusion as a functional end to my theorizing through dance, to the process of writing and revising this thesis, but as a structural end that marks what I am able to share in an academic paper. The functionality of my writing and theorizing, and its potentials, are unending in that this process can never really be over for me. As time passes, the present me, the me that is able to reflect on this process, and the me that engaged in the researching, rehearsing, and writing that eventually produced this thesis are always in an intersubjective relationship. I continue to become through this work, regardless of the distance that grows between me and me, or the "me and not me" that is generated through memory and reflection (Muñoz, 1999, p. 3). I can never quite be the person who wrote this thesis ever again and future realizations or insights that I have regarding this work will come too late; belatedness, in this case, is enabled through my inability to occupy the same self that wrote this thesis, through my inevitable absence.

Returning (Again) to Marga Gomez and Wigs

I will "end" by looking to the beginning of this thesis and returning to Gomez, much in the same way that Muñoz's (1999) introduction to *Disidentifications* begins and ends with Gomez's (1996) *MGisPW&G*.

What has Gomez offered for me and this project?

1. The Marga Gomez who I first encountered within Muñoz's theorizing, who lives in the world of *MGisPW&G*, has opened a world of queer glamor to me that has made my comprehension of queerness, of intuitively queer knowing, more ambiguous and more uncertain.
2. In conversation with Muñoz's work, Gomez has offered potentials for reading cross-gender identifications, homophobic representations of queerness in the media that may be reimagined through disidentification, and the simultaneous joy and loss of queer interpellation.
3. Gomez has not given me full clarity, or even reassurance, but her work and that of many queer creatives has offered more than just representation, more than just a suggestion of how one can be queer in a heteronormative mainstream.
4. Gomez has given me a fragmented clarity regarding how queer self-formation may emerge across space and time, through intersubjective knowing that is fragmentary itself.
5. Although I cannot map my own self-formation evenly onto that which Gomez explores in *MGisPW&G*, Gomez has given me *more* in all senses of the word.

Maybe you understand what I meant when I referred to *more* throughout this thesis, and maybe you have your own version of *more* that you are looking for—I believe that we all do, and our

intuitions are one of the ways through which we can locate them. For Gomez, some of this *more* was hinted at by the wigs worn by the lesbians on television. As she describes:

> They were very depressed, very gloomy. You don't get that blue unless you've broken up with Martina. There were three of them. All disguised in raincoats, dark glasses, wigs. It was the wigs that made me want to be one (Gomez, 1996, p. 196).

What else can wigs do?

1. Wigs can convey grandeur, excess, hyper-femininity, and certainly the drag queen aesthetics that engage with all of these elements.
2. Wigs function as ways to reimagine past histories—for Naomi and Christina the wigs were a vital aspect of their go-go dancer costumes, of their envisioning of queer love set amidst the aesthetics of club life in the 1960s and 70s.
3. Wigs also allow you to hide, as evidenced by the lesbians' choice to wear them as part of their disguises.
4. Literally, a wig gives you *more* hair than you would have if you were not wearing one. The cover of *Disidentifications*, at least the edition that I own, features an image of drag performer Vaginal Creme Davis, in a wig—a long, very blonde wig.

For queers who search for *more*, in all its forms, wigs are more than just costumes, more than just disguises, but ways of being and feeling *more*. Of course it was the wigs that made Gomez want to be one, of course it was the wigs that made me want to be one.

Appendix A

Video of “returning, again”

Visit the following link to view a video of “returning, again” from Saturday, March 29th, 2025: https://vimeo.com/1075829649/19a7309570.

Appendix B

Synopsis of "returning, again"

Night And Day: "returning, again" begins with the dancers in front of the blue curtain that conceals the stage from the audience. The curtain opens in darkness, then the lights fade on and the music begins. The version of "Night And Day" used in this section was performed by Artie Shaw but originally written by Cole Porter in 1932 according to Melissa Block (2000) in a broadcast and article about Porter's musical career for NPR. "Night And Day" was featured in the 1934 film, *The Gay Divorcee*, starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. I added a sound bite from a recording of another of Artie Shaw's renditions of "Night And Day" that includes an announcer saying, "next on the dance hour comes that unforgettable melody from *Gay Divorcee*, "Night And Day!" The lights brighten to reveal the dancers; Emma and Cherace lounge, facing away from the audience while Ava and Hannah sit, leaning against each other, to their left. Ava and Hannah stand up together and begin dancing facing the audience. Their movements are gestural and Jazz-esque, and they move in unison, eventually coming to lean on one another. Hannah rolls over Ava's back, and they each trace the line of the other's shoulders. Emma and Cherace slowly rise from the floor and spin quickly to cross paths. Ava and Hannah position themselves in between and behind Emma and Cherace. All four dancers begin dancing together, Ava and Hannah doing one phrase facing each other and Emma and Cherace doing another phrase facing the audience. The pairs slide to switch spots, moving closer to the audience. They repeat the same sequence, eventually ending directly in front of the

front row of seats, with Emma and Cherace back in the front. Throughout this section, the lights only illuminate the area in front of the main curtain, leaving the rest of the stage in darkness.

Souvenir d'Italie: As "Night And Day" fades into "Souvenir d'Italie" by Lelio Luttazzi, the dancers all react to its first notes, diving to the ground. "Souvenir d'Italie" was composed in 1955 and used in the 1957 Italian film "Souvenirs d'Italie" as stated by the Wikipedia (n.d.) entry for the film. The version I used is from the Lelio Luttazzi Trio's 2009 album, "Le Mie Preferite." Hannah and Ava slink around Emma and Cherace, rolling and sliding to eventually reach the center of the stage, as close to the front row of seats as possible; they lounge there, watching the other two dancers. Emma and Cherace roll to standing and Cherace slowly turns their head to look at Emma. After a moment of looking, they come together and hold hands. They dance shoulder to shoulder, eventually breaking away from each other to trace the line of each other's shoulders while moving away from the audience. Hannah and Ava follow them to form a line facing away from the audience. In this section, the whole stage is partially illuminated with a warm, more golden hue.

Saturn in Return, part 1: "Saturn in Return," by Mad Keys—a free Jazz piece in Mad Keys' 2024 album "Currents"—begins with five distinct notes, accentuated by the dancers as they each stand up and sit back down on beat. Emma is the only one who remains standing, moving slowly to the left of the

group, closer to the audience. Ava joins them in movement, moving to the right but circling around to rejoin Emma. Hannah and Cherace follow suit. This section was improvisational—I asked the dancers to use the movement vocabulary from the first two sections of the piece but to move as if time were disrupted—except for a short gestural phrase which I created based on Voguing basics that I learned from watching recordings of Willi Ninja Field and from being in a rehearsal process with Professor Angelica Monteiro; Professor Monteiro has studied Waacking extensively which, like Voguing, is a style born from queer club cultures but places more emphasis on shard hand and arm movements. Ava, Cherace, Hannah, and Emma end this section, tinged with an orange glow, in a line facing away from the audience

open this wall: berlioz's "open this wall" marks a lighting color shift from orange to rosy pink. This song features cuttings from a PBS interview with the singer, Nancy Wilson. Wilson had interviewed with Darryl Wood of Detroit's "American Black Journal" in 1994. In "open this wall" berlioz used a clip of Wilson saying:

> I am, and I'm wonderful, and I know there's this supreme power that gives me the ability to be any and everything if I just allow it to happen. It's about not going against the grain. It's about not batting your head against a wall that will not come down. It's about saying, open this wall for me please (Detroit PBS, 2018, 21:39-22:04)

In this section, the dancers share each other's weight, melting and sliding as a group before quickly running to the other side of the stage, right in front of the audience. They dance through an energetic, groovy phrase in unison then run as far away from the audience as possible. Each dancer begins a gestural motif that they repeat until returning to the previous phrase, one by one. They find each other in a line and lean into each other again before breaking away, running off

the stage. Together, they emerge from the black curtains on either side of the stage and dance the phrase in unison once more before leaving the stage again.

I Feel For You: "I Feel For You" was originally written by Prince in 1979 but the most well-known version is Chaka Khan's, featuring Grandmaster Melle Mel according to the Wikipedia (n.d.) entry on the song. It begins as the lights fade, then fade back on, out again, and suddenly flash on in full force in time with the music; the stage is well-lit and dampled with light. Ava and Cherace strut out from opposite sides of the stage, and are soon joined by Hannah and Emma to form a diagonal line. Each dancer has a moment in the (figurative) spotlight to do a short Vogue-esque phrase before they join together in a group pose. Hannah leads them in a strut to the back of the stage, then struts down the middle towards the audience. Each dancer hits a pose before forming a diagonal line, close to the audience, and they dance through a new phrase that features elements of Jazz and House dance.

Saturn in Return, part 2: A sudden musical, lighting, and affective shift marks the final section of "returning, again." Chaka Khan's "Make me wanna sing" is interrupted by "Saturn in Return." At the same time, the lights shift from bright white, to a moody, dark pink and the dancers' gazes snap to the audience. They join hands, coming to lean on each other once again. They travel to the back of the stage holding hands and each break away to repeat a short

phrase from the first section of the piece, eventually sinking to the ground. They all stand up to find each other again in an ending in the middle of the stage. Emma and Cherace lie down, Hannah and Ava sit, all sharing each other's weight. The music and lights slowly fade out on the dancers, backs turned to the audience.

Appendix C

Credits for “returning, again”

Choreographer: Frankie Crosby, in collaboration with the dancers

Dancers: Ava Garland, Cherace Lin, Hannah San Clemente, and Emma Uva

Costume Design: Frankie Crosby and Tilly Adams

Lighting Designer: Ezekiel Baskin

Photographer: Peter Raper

Videographer: Paul Fortier

Music: “Night And Day” by Artie Shaw, “Souvenir d’Italie” by Lelio Luttazzi, “Saturn in Return” by Mad Keys, “open this wall” by berlioz, “I Feel for You” by Chaka Khan (mixed by Frankie Crosby)

Appendix D

Posters for 2025 Senior Capstone Conert, “Soul Ties”

Appendix E

"Soul Ties" Concert Program

Visit the following link to view the concert program for "Soul Ties":

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGlbDcw3dI/57WrNUq8XgZS2ExXwN3xoQ/view?utm_content=DAGlbDcw3dI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h869b207c5b

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